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Photo *Lallie Charles.*

ARMED TO THE TEETH.

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By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co., 133 New Bond Street, London, W.

"A HEAVY LOAD."

From the painting by Fred Morgan.

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BROTHERS and SISTERS on the STAGE.

Photo *Adolphus Tear.*

THE MOORE SISTERS.

The Moore Sisters are either clever actresses or popular singers, and Bertha is a playwright as well, though she still remains loyal to the concert platform.

Last year Decima was married to Major Guggisberg, of the Royal Engineers.

Since her first appearance in "The Gondoliers" she has travelled professionally all over the world, and is perhaps the best-known member of the family.

Miss Eva Moore (Mrs. H. V. Esmond) was the first to try her fortune on the stage, in Mr. Toole's Company. Some of her husband's plays have been written especially for her. In lighter parts she very much resembles Decima.

Jessie Moore, who followed Eva on to the stage, is the wife of a successful actor. Not long since, the sisters played together in a piece written by Miss Bertha Moore and performed at the Queen's Hall.

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Photos *Ellis & Walery.*

HAIDÉE, FRED, and HUNTLEY WRIGHT.

Remarking on the extraordinary resemblance between his brother and himself, Mr. Fred Wright put it thus humorously: "If you meet me wearing *pince-nez*, that's my brother; and if you meet my brother without the *pince-nez*, that's I! It is most unfortunate at times, too. Why, only the other day a man who owed me money went up to Huntley and paid him. I get all my bad qualities from Huntley, and he gets all his virtues from me."

The Wright family played a great deal together in the provinces before they became famous. Fred and Huntley are likely to be associated shortly in a play specially written round the fact of their resemblance.

Their clever sister, Haidée, was brought out by her father when she was quite a tiny mite. She has made some big hits, especially as Stephanus, the boy martyr, in "The Sign of the Cross," and she has played Ophelia to four different Hamlets. When not too busy acting she writes, many of her short stories having appeared in leading magazines.

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IRENE VANBRUGH
(Mrs. Dion Boucicault).

Photos *Lallie Charles.*

VIOLET VANBRUGH
(Mrs. Arthur Bourchier).

VIOLET and IRENE VANBRUGH.

The sisters Violet and Irene Vanbrugh are the daughters of Prebendary Barnes, a cleric who was so broad-minded and self-sacrificing as to give up a remunerative living in Exeter and come to London to make a home for his daughters when they decided to go on the stage.

The late Lewis Carroll, who was a friend of the Prebendary, took great interest in the gifted girls, and it was through his influence that Irene made her first London appearance in "Alice in Wonderland."

There is no more popular actress in London than Miss Violet Vanbrugh. She is a good and charming woman, and an artist who approaches her work with culture and refinement.

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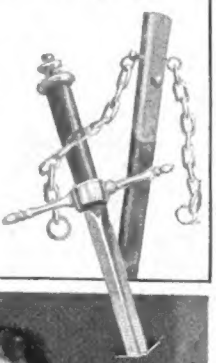
H. B. IRVING and LAURENCE IRVING.

H. B. Irving thinks that critics are almost too kind to actors nowadays, and fears that the Stage may fall into decay for lack of that stimulating abuse it was so liberally peppered with half a century ago. Certainly the Public and Press have done justice to H. B., and undoubtedly he is one of the ablest actors of the day. One of the most trying moments of his life was when playing in "The Lady of Lyons," his father being in the audience. H. B.'s discomfiture was complete when a loud crash from a neighbouring display of fireworks drowned his elocution. "Altogether," he added sadly, "I don't think my father was much impressed with my abilities on that occasion."



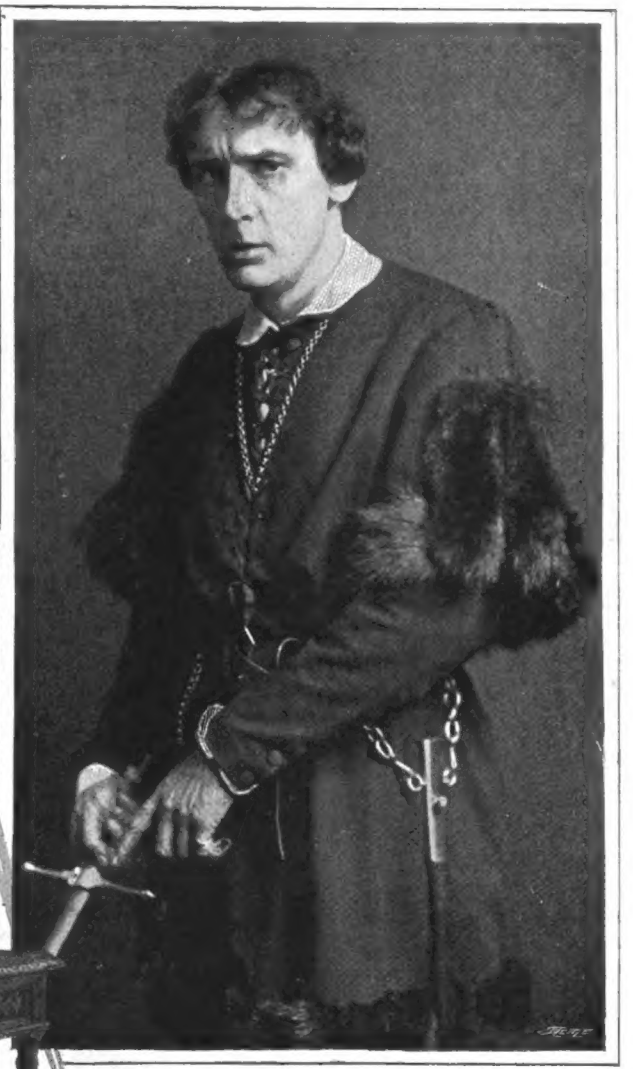


Photo *Johnston & Hoffmann.*

H. B. IRVING.

Like his father, H. B. Irving underwent a thorough experience on country stages before attempting serious work in London. His style differs from that of his brother Laurence. H. B. has regular features and a grave, judicial manner, whereas Laurence is more impulsive and excitable. Laurence is a writer of plays of a serious type.

Photo *Ellis & Walery.*

LAURENCE IRVING.

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Photo *Bassano.*

ZENA and PHYLLIS DARE.

The Dare girls seldom act conjointly. Though they are quite sisterly, it is recognised that each is a star of the first magnitude, and in consequence there is too little room for both on any one stage.

They are opposite in temperament. Phyllis is always calm and collected. But in spite of her three and a-half years' experience, the slightest thing upsets Zena. She worries herself before the production of a new piece so that she can hardly eat or sleep. Phyllis gave a proof of the stern material of which she is built, last season at Liverpool. While rehearsing for the pantomime she was attacked by a most serious throat trouble. She was terribly ill for a week or two, but was about again for the performance at a stage when most people under similar conditions would prefer to be wheeled along in an invalid chair.

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ELLEN.

MARION.

ELLEN, MARION, and FRED TERRY.

The Terrys come down from two generations of actors. Old Daniel Terry, the grandfather, was a great friend of Sir Walter Scott.

When quite tiny mites the girls showed the family bent. Kate, Ellen, and Marion would enact little dramas of their own in the nursery, using live cocks and hens among their *dramatis personæ*. Their talent was carefully fostered by their parents, and later Kate did much to help on her younger sisters. A business career was mapped out for Fred, but the family destiny was too strong. One day he was escorting Marion to the Prince of Wales' Theatre, when they were met by Mr. Bancroft, who asked Fred if he thought he could act. He was engaged on the spot for a small part in "Money" (the piece in which his sister was playing), at a guinea a week.

In 1882 Ellen, Marion, and Florence appeared on the same stage in "The Merchant of Venice." And on several occasions Marion has acted as substitute for her more famous sister in big Shakespearian *rôles*.

Photo Ellis & Walery.

FRED.

Photo Window & Grove.

Photo Ellis & Walery.

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Photo *Bassano.*

Photo *Histed.*

COURTICE and LOUIE POUNDS.

On two separate occasions the theatre-going public narrowly escaped losing Mr. Courtice Pounds from the comic opera stage. Mr. Pounds began his musical career as a choir-boy, and when his voice broke decided to earn his living as an organist. One day, however, his master discovered accidentally that Courtice had developed a beautiful tenor voice. Sir John Stainer heard him, and encouraged him with the quaint remark: "You have a good voice, eat plenty of meat and you will do very well."

Instead of pursuing the idea of becoming an organist, Mr. Pounds approached Mr. D'Oyley Carte and told him what Sir John Stainer had said. Mr. Pounds made his *début* in the chorus of "Patience," and shortly afterwards was given some excellent opportunities. Not being satisfied, however, he decided to quit the stage for the Moore and Burgess Minstrels, but was ultimately persuaded not to take the fatal step.

Miss Louie Pounds has followed her brother's lead, and is now almost as well known. She made her name as Jill-all-Alone in "Merrie England," her fellow-actor being a large tabby cat who played his allotted part extremely well.

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Photos **MARIE TEMPEST.**

Lallie Charles. **FLORENCE TEMPEST.**

MARIE and FLORENCE TEMPEST.

When Miss Marie Tempest turned her back on light opera, the Stage became the richer by a brilliant *comédienne*. Miss Tempest considers the five years spent in musical comedy as wasted time. Certainly she has shown herself capable of more serious things. There are plenty of people yet who like a good comedy, and Miss Tempest well knows how to give the Public what they want. Her success in "The Marriage of Kitty" was, of course, phenomenal, even eclipsing her performance as "Becky Sharp." Miss Tempest is a lady of altogether exceptional talents. She has a beautiful voice and is a fine pianist. As an actress she is finished and subtle, with a magnetic charm that grows upon her audiences.

Her sister, Miss Florence Tempest, is strikingly like her in appearance, and has acted as her understudy.

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ALMOST SNARED

A Mistake that . . Nearly Ended in a Tragedy. .

By C. Randolph-Lichfield.

ES," said John Henderson, absently turning over the papers on his desk, "it is very important—it is of the very utmost importance, in fact. And I had it here in my hands not an hour ago. Did anyone come in while I was out just now?"

The head clerk knitted his brows consideringly.

"No, sir—nobody came in here," he said, his face clearing of the shadow of doubt.

"Well, the documents have got to be found, Jenner," said Henderson.

"Yes, sir," Jenner responded mildly. "It must be in the room, unless you chanced to slip it into your pocket and dropped it while you were out?"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the financier, pushing his long brown moustache upwards with the back of his first finger. "I—Let me see. M—m, yes, I'm perfectly certain that the paper was on the desk when I went out. I had it beside me for reference when I wrote to Mr. Bernstein."

"Oh—one of the papers relating to the loan?" said Mr. Jenner gently, his interest perceptibly enhanced.

"Y—es, y—es," replied Henderson, with a peculiar drawl so characteristic that his head clerk knew at once that he had encroached on his employer's confidence. "I had just written to Bernstein about the matter when Mr. Kerlyn came in, and he waited while I did up the letter, and—I posted it when I went out to Wilkie's office. Wilkie wasn't in, so I left Kerlyn to wait for him, and came straight back here. I wasn't gone more than half-an-hour, as you know, and when I returned I could not find the blessed paper."

"No one could have got into this room without my knowledge, for I did not leave my desk during your absence," said Mr. Jenner with conviction.

"I'm certain I left the thing on my desk," muttered Henderson; but doubt was evidently gathering in his mind. "Well, I'll go round to Wilkie's and settle all doubt that I didn't leave it there," he added hastily, picking up his hat. "Meanwhile, you run through those papers and look about for the document; I've hunted till I'm so bewildered that I may possibly have overlooked it. It's—well, it's a very ordinary-looking sheet—double quarto, folded twice, and stamped. Probably I slipped it back into a foolscap envelope."

"The—er—the security?" said Jenner anxiously.

"Yes, yes," answered Henderson shortly, as he hurried out. "You'll know it when you see it."

Jenner paused before the desk till the door closed sharply, when he dropped into the financier's chair and began a rapid examination of the papers on the desk.

"It's nonsense," he muttered, while he searched. "If he didn't take it out with him it must be here. He's muddled—half his mind is on business and the other half on his marriage next week; and he's slipped it away somewhere while his thoughts were in the

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wrong half of his mind. That's Kerlyn's doing; the sight of the future best man made him forget for the moment his best interests. No, it doesn't appear to be here. A nice—a nice kettle of fish if he did take it out and lose it! Bernsteins are just the people to repudiate the loan if they had a chance. We—we——. Wh—, why, what's this? . . . This must be the letter he wrote to them and thinks he posted! Good——!" The exclamation ended in a soft whistle. "That's what he's done!—he transposed the security for the letter, and posted it to Bernstein, If it doesn't wreck him, he'll be lucky!"

He had started up to leave the room when John Henderson hurried in.

"Found it?" Henderson inquired eagerly.

"'Fraid you've sent it to Bernsteins in mistake for this letter."

Henderson snatched the letter, glanced at it, and flung it upon the desk.

He stood very upright, his handsome, keen-looking face very tense, his dark eyes bent upon his head clerk's fingers as they nervously toyed with the envelope in which the letter had been found, and Jenner waited anxiously, half-expecting the silence would end in an outburst of temper. But it did not, and Jenner ought not to have expected it would; John Henderson was calmest when there was a storm within him.

"That letter's got to be recovered," he said quietly in a hoarse voice. "If it isn't—you and I and the other clerks will probably be numbered among the unemployed within a month. It's a matter of sixty thousand pounds, Jenner."

"I—I know, sir," answered Jenner, with sympathetic gravity.

"And from what I've heard recently, Bernsteins are quite capable of denying the whole thing if that paper gets into their hands; they'd regard it as a special dispensation of Providence, especially as the whole thing has been so informal and quietly carried through all along. To speak the truth, I wrote old Bernstein to-day only because I wished to get a little stronger feeling that they'd settle up next month; the letter, you see, is worded—And in the very act! But we must think and act at the same time, Jenner! I posted it at the office in London Wall. What time would the box be cleared?"

"Three forty-five," replied Jenner, glancing at his watch with an alert air.

"So it's in the sorting-office now! Well, we shan't recover it from there; an ex-Postmaster-General himself proved to his own chagrin that he could not recover a letter he had wrongly posted, even though it was nominally his property while in transit and actually his in point of fact. It's possible I might obtain an order from St. Martin's for the letter to be held pending Bernstein's—while we asked him if the post people should return it to me or—— No, that wouldn't be the least possible good. Besides, how should I describe the letter? Well, whatever's to be done must be done between this and nine o'clock to-morrow morning."

"I don't see what can be done, sir," said Jenner desperately. "It is a most——"

"Don't talk rubbish, man!" cried Henderson, pacing the room. "Something's got to be done, even if it's only a madly reckless attempt to rob the mail-cart on its way up Cheapside to the G.P.O. Look here, Jenner! You're a straight chap and have known me some years, so I don't mind telling you that. Well, it wouldn't, perhaps, matter so impossibly much if it only meant the loss of the money and having to start the climb again—though a man's old at forty-three to do that; but, as you know, I'm to be married next week, and—— Well, where on earth shall I be if I am ruined when Bernsteins open office at nine to-morrow, eh? You may say that's the very heart of the situation. Can you suggest anything? Sit down!—have a cigar!—smoke helps!"

"I was tracing the route of the letter, wondering what was the most vulnerable point," said Jenner thoughtfully, as he took a cigar and pinched it critically. "It will go by mail-cart from the office to the G.P.O., there to be sorted to the provincial mail."

"Yes, and when once it has been dropped into the Liverpool bag and the bag's sealed, the chances of our recovering it are worse than before."

"Until the seal of the bag has been broken at Liverpool," said Jenner softly.

"You're right, Jenner! It's in Liverpool I must make my effort to get it back. Here—I may want some money!"

Henderson threw himself into his chair and wrote out a cheque.

"Get off to the bank with this," he said. "Have it in fives and tens. And—Jenner! . . . Wire to your wife you'll not be home to-night—that you're going out of town with me on business."

"All right," replied the head clerk.

* * * * *

"Look here, Jenner," said Henderson, when, two hours later, they were being whirled on their way to Liverpool, "the more

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I consider this affair the more inevitably desperate the remedy appears. It is open to me to see old Bernstein before he deals with his correspondence, and ask him to give me the letter unopened—tell him it contains strictly private papers. But he might refuse —he'd be entitled to; and that would dish me entirely if he took full advantage of the situation. Hence, I must try something before that, and it seems to me the only other thing is to recover the letter after it has been dropped into the letter-box, and before the office is opened. Now, that would, of course, be a crime, and I don't intend to rush you into anything like that; this is a matter of the most vital importance to me, but to you it's merely a matter of losing a job."

"Oh, it means more than that," returned Jenner, with a smile; "I take a personal interest in your welfare, sir. But why not try to bribe the delivering postman? He's probably an honest man, but——"

"I've thought of that; it's not feasible. A bribe might induce him to forget the regulations for a moment or two, but not to risk being made the instrument in a great robbery, which he would immediately fear. How could I convince him of my honesty—induce him to believe the truth? The very sight of my money would make him suspect me, and he wouldn't dare do it. Ten to one he'd not deliver the letter at Bernstein's, but would take them back to the post-office, and after warning Bernstein of the attempt to tamper with his mail, deliver them when the office was open."

"Yes," muttered Jenner. "But how do you propose to extract the letter from the box?"

"That depends upon the description of the box—fact is, I'm prepared to break into the office for it. When we reach Liverpool you'll go to the Central Hotel, book rooms for us, and find out for me what time the mails are delivered in Bernstein's quarter of the city. Meanwhile, I'll look round there and find out how the letter can be got at. Lose that money I will not! And it would be utter folly to trust Bernstein after what I've heard, and in the face of giving him such encouragement to deny the loan as letting the only security fall into his hands."

"But I understand that his sons are not quite so unscrupulous as he is," remarked Jenner. "They've no end of money tied up, those people. I've heard old Bernstein spoken of as being worth half-a-million. But they say the office staff is so small that he often stays hours over-time working off the arrears of the clerks' work. For my part——"

But he saw that Henderson, engrossed in his own reflections, was not listening, and he lapsed into silence.

Late that evening Henderson joined Jenner at the Central Hotel, and they repaired to the financier's own room.

"I don't know, Jenner, 'pon my soul, I don't know!" muttered Henderson, tossing his hat upon the bed. "It's the most confoundedly rummy letter-box I've encountered —a narrow, vertical slit, with a long drop and a stiff flap. There was a light still burning in one of the rooms on the ground-floor—a back room; but there could hardly have been anyone there at this time of night? The place is situated just right for my purpose—down a dark, deserted court; a low-pitched, old-fashioned sort of building. But I'm afraid there's no chance of getting the letter through that door. So much so, in fact, that I bought these at a hawker's stall I passed on my way here."

As he spoke, he took from his pocket a small but useful-looking packer's-jemmy, a keyhole-saw and a gimlet.

"You're not going to that extreme?" said Jenner, turning pale.

"Oh, but I am—if necessary," replied Henderson doggedly; but he avoided his clerk's eyes. "I've got my girl to think about, you see. You can stay here, but I'm going in at one of the windows."

"Oh, I suppose I'm in this to the end, whatever the end may be," responded Jenner quietly. "What's the gimlet for?"

"Don't know," said Henderson, with a laugh, "but I believe it's essential in a burglar's kit. What about the mails?"

"Oh, your letter should be dropped into Bernstein's box about a quarter-past seven."

"Good! It's practically dark then, and I mean to be waiting inside the door for it. If you like to get an hour's sleep, I'll wake you in plenty of time. What? . . . Well, there's a pack of cards in my bag; we'll have a game of penny nap instead."

* * * * *

"You'd never get anything out of that letter-flap—certainly not one letter out of perhaps a score," whispered Jenner, descending the shallow doorstep to join Henderson under one of the windows of Messrs. R. Bernstein & Co.'s offices.

Henderson agreed and drew the clerk's attention to a just-discernible light, apparently in a back room of the building. They

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discussed it in whispers, finally coming to the conclusion that it was the light of a by-pass burner of an incandescent gas lamp.

"This window's open," said Jenner, whose head was close to Henderson's, as they peered into the office through the gauze-screen within the lower half of the window.

Henderson examined the window and found it was open an inch at the bottom. Without comment he tried it. It went up heavily but noiselessly, and the next moment he unlatched the gauze-screen and stood it down just within the room.

"Anyone coming?" he inquired, preparing to enter.

"No—get on," answered Jenner, who followed him and closed the window and replaced the screen.

Silently they groped their way across the room in search of the door communicating with the hall. Presently Henderson stopped, detaining Jenner.

"When I came last night, that light," he said, indicating the speck of light in the adjoining room, the communicating door to which stood open, "was up and the door was closed; I could see the strong glow of light streaming under the door. Who could have been here to have turned it down?"

"Bernstein often works here very late," suggested Jenner.

"And the window?"

"Yes," said Jenner, in a dubious way, "it's odd. The sooner we're out of this the better."

"The circumstances seem to imply that we're not the first to pass through that window this night," whispered Henderson. "But still, it may mean nothing. Hark!"

The sounds he had detected were of quick, somewhat erratic footsteps, as of a man passing from door to door of the buildings in the court.

"We must have been longer than we thought," Henderson muttered. "That's the postman."

"The door's here," said Jenner, groping in a corner.

"Don't move till he's passed by."

With bated breath they waited. They heard the postman shuffle on to the doorstep, open the flap of the letter-box and drop in a number of letters, which pitter-pattered down, apparently, on the floor of the hall. There was no knock, and the postman passed on.

Cautiously the two men stepped out into the hall, and, striking a vesta, Henderson saw a score of letters lying just within the door. Recognising instantly the one he sought, he snatched it up, and blew out the vesta.

"Got it!" he panted, with a soft laugh. "As easy as drinking a bowl of milk!"

"You're sure it's the right one," inquired Jenner. "Let's go in to the back room and make absolutely sure."

They passed quickly through the front room to the back, guided by the glimmer of light.

"Shut the door, and turn up the gas," Henderson said, not waiting for Jenner to comply, but stripping the envelope off his precious paper.

"Yes, thank Heaven!" he exclaimed, as the gas shot up. "I've got it."

"Look!" cried Jenner, pointing with a trembling hand towards a corner of the room

Henderson turned, and started back with a cry of horror.

Huddled in the corner lay a stout, bald-headed man. No second glance was needed to tell that the man was dead; his whole appearance and attitude denoted it, and there was an ugly, dark stain on the carpet by his side.

"Jenner!" gasped Henderson, "what have we stumbled on?"

"Murder," answered the clerk faintly. "Look—there's the knife. Let's get out of this!"

Dazed by the sudden horror of the thing and the peril it constituted, they hurried out, Jenner only stopping to turn out the gas.

They left by the way they had entered, fixing the gauze-screen and leaving the window as they had found it then. As they hurried out of the narrow entrance to the court they ran into a policeman.

"Ullo!" he exclaimed, in a tone of mild suspicion.

Henderson apologised, and they turned out of the main street into the first byway they came to, feeling certain that the constable was watching them.

They passed no word until they reached their hotel, where the servants were commencing the duties of the day. Henderson, in a hollow voice, suggested brandy, to which Jenner agreed.

While they drank, Henderson looked up the trains for London.

"We can just do it, if we are quick," he said, throwing the time-table down. "Run and fetch my bag will you, while I settle the bill."

They caught the train by a narrow margin of time; and a sense of relief came to them as they were swept away from the platform;

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Henderson turned, and started back with a cry of horror.

for both had felt a horrible fear that something might occur to detain them.

"You've got your security all right?" said Jenner suddenly, as the train began to gather speed.

"Yes, ye-es——"

"What?" inquired Jenner sharply.

"I dropped the envelope in the back room."

Jenner was silent, while his face turned grey, and they stared at each other long in anxious thought.

"The date-stamp will show that the old man could not have opened it, and, of course, it had my name and address on the flap," said Henderson weakly.

"I'm afraid your little act of absent-mindedness yesterday has landed us in a hornets' nest," murmured Jenner grimly.

"There are horrible possibilities," admitted Henderson, white-faced, with a blank stare. "That envelope ought to lead the police all over our trail, and you may bet your life that constable we ran into will remember us. It appears to me that if the police follow our movements we shall need a a very smart lawyer to save our skins, unless it is made manifest who actually did the old man to death."

"You don't pile it on at all, do you?" exclaimed Jenner desperately. "It's a nice position—mine—for a husband and a father!"

"It's a ghastly business. I cannot possibly get married next week in the circumstances, and what excuse shall I give?"

"We ought to have announced the crime to the constable and made a frank confession of our presence in the office," said Jenner sullenly, with conviction. "The document in your pocket and the fact that we had nothing about us belonging to Bernstein would have supported us! and the presence of the envelope beside the old fellow's body would have corroborated us instead of being damning evidence against us."

"Yes," agreed Henderson, leaning back in his seat wearily. "But the possibility of that expired suddenly more than an hour ago —at a moment, in fact, that it could not possibly have occurred to either of us, since the damning evidence was not realised until a minute or two ago; so your wise precaution's a bit late, Jenner. Any idea of giving ourselves up to the police may now be

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"I left that beastly jemmy in the hall."

dismissed as suicidal, and no doubt that accursed envelope is at the present moment in the hands of the detectives, probably regarded by them as a fine clue. We can do nothing but wait, keeping our own counsel, in the hope that the circumstances of the tragedy may exculpate us. I fancy we shall find our evening papers unusually interesting to us to-night, d' you know? Oh, lor'!" he added, groaning and ruffling his hair, "I left that beastly jemmy in the hall."

"What?"

"Yes. I had it ready to force open the letter-box, if there were one, and I laid it down on the mat while I struck a light. I forgot it in the excitement of recovering my letter."

Jenner groaned, and wiped his forehead with his handkerchief.

"Oh, well, the police may not trace it to the hawker, or the hawker may not be able to describe you," he said faint-heartedly.

"The point is that, taken in connection with that envelope dropped close to the murdered man, it will strongly support the probable theory that whoever broke in wanted the contents of the envelope. The police will immediately want to know the nature of the contents, and they will at once apply to me. You see, it points the connection between the intruders at the office with the letter-delivery, one letter of which was obviously opened in the room where the dead man lay."

Arriving in London, Henderson bought an early edition of an evening paper; and they took a cab for the office.

Henderson opened the paper, and turned to the "stop-press" space.

"There you are," he whispered, fearful lest the driver should overhear. "Just the announcement, 'Murder of a Millionaire: Our Liverpool Correspondent telegraphs that Mr. R. Bernstein, the millionaire, was found brutally murdered in his office early this morning.'"

Jenner nodded dumbly.

"Well, we've got to brace ourselves up, man," said Henderson, feverishly folding the paper and thrusting it deep into his pocket. "We shall only pile up suspicion against ourselves if we neglect business and appear distraught. We must strain every nerve to ward off suspicion."

It seemed to them as they rolled eastward that every seventh shop was a newsagent's, and every third display-bill announced the "Murder of a Millionaire," and although they realised that it was to the office that the police would come in search of them, it brought a sense of relief to get back to business in their comfortable rooms. The quiet atmosphere of the office, the steady, deliberate mien of the clerks, and the need of attending to small details, calmed them wonderfully; and as the afternoon passed away and the light began to fail, their hopes rose. But every time the telephone-bell jangled, they felt a tug at their heart-strings; and every caller who looked in was received with furtive glances of anxiety.

At closing time they left together and repaired to a restaurant, for while they had felt no desire for food all day, nor tasted it, they knew it was necessary for them to eat. And while they waited to be served, they read the latest reports of the Liverpool tragedy.

"Nothing," said Henderson softly, throwing his paper aside. "Nothing in

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here to imply what view is taken of the affair."

"There's a reference in this to a clue of great importance," returned Jenner, whose paper was of a somewhat later edition than Henderson's, "and it says that the police expect to effect an arrest almost immediately."

"They always say that. The morning papers will probably clear things up for us—one way or the other. I shan't do anything till to-morrow."

"What did you think of doing?"

"Oh, I meant about my marriage."

Jenner turned over his chop in non-committal silence.

But the morning papers fell short of Henderson's expectations: most of them gave full reports of the murder, but not one offered so much as a hint as to the character of the clues the police had, or what was the official theory. It was very evident indeed that the police had been exasperatingly reticent, which some papers attributed to the fact that they expected to effect an arrest at any moment, while others declared it was due to their being completely baffled.

Neither of these suggestions comforted Henderson and Jenner over much, and when they met at the office in the morning they avoided each other's eyes in a way which denoted the similarity of their sentiments; both felt indeed mistrust of the other's ability not to commit some compromising indiscretion which would involve them equally in the gravest possible events.

It was nearly noon when a junior clerk brought a visiting card into Henderson's room. It bore the name of Detective-sergeant A. Rathbone, under which appeared the ominous words: "Liverpool City Police."

Henderson took it and laid it before him on his blotting-pad, and stared at it blindly for some seconds. He rose suddenly, and found some difficulty in drawing his breath.

"Send him in, Hill," he said, and as the clerk withdrew he hurriedly filled and lighted a pipe.

Sergeant Rathbone was a big, middle-aged man with a discomfiting side glance and a dull, expressionless face.

"Good-morning," said Henderson, standing before the fireplace, and relighting his pipe unnecessarily.

The visitor inclined his head silently, and glanced round the apartment slowly.

"Take a chair, will you?" said Henderson, dropping into his desk chair. "I suppose you have come in reference to the tragic death of Mr. Bernstein, of which the papers are full?"

"Yes," replied the sergeant absently. He accepted the chair Henderson offered him, and drawing a bulky packet of papers from an inner pocket of his overcoat began a very deliberate search.

Henderson watched him furtively. There was a blue paper among the others, and Henderson drew a deep breath as the man's fingers passed it and selected the commercial-shaped envelope in which he had posted the security to Bernstein.

"That—we found that in the course of searching Mr. Bernstein's office," said the detective, laying the envelope on the corner of the desk. "You'll see it bears the date-stamp of the seventeenth instant, and your name is on the flap. What did it contain?"

"The seventeenth?" muttered Henderson, thoughtfully, bending low over the envelope and blowing great clouds of smoke across the desk. "It was addressed by me, so it must have been a rather private-—. Yes, of course; I wrote to Mr. Bernstein that day on a particularly private matter of business."

"I should like to see the letter. You've a copy, I suppose?"

Henderson rang his desk-bell, and Jenner appeared.

"Tell Hill to bring my private-letter copy-book," said Henderson, with a little too much emphasis on the "Hill," for he wished Jenner to keep out of the way.

The book was brought. Henderson turned up the page bearing a copy of his letter to Bernstein and pushed it towards the detective who read it twice, very slowly.

"Did you inclose anything with this?"

"No," answered Henderson, with perfect truth.

"I gather from this that you have made considerable loans to the deceased?" said the detective with a puzzled look. "And it implies that you feared your future relationship might not be quite too pleasant. In other words, you seemed to have entertained a fear that Bernstein might not repay you—was not quite safe. Am I mistaken?"

"I—well, frankly, I had heard certain things, and I wished by that letter to extract from him an admission that I had loaned him the money. I wished to feel quite safe."

"His sons suggested that the letter might have had reference to a loan which they said will fall due very shortly."

"That is reassuring, and good enough for

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me," said Henderson, considerably eased in his mind on that point.

"But can you suggest," said the detective, pushing the letter-book on to the desk, and fingering his thick underlip, "what particular interest that letter could have had for anyone, or what papers of great value anyone could have imagined it might contain?"

"N—o, I can't."

"M—m, you can't. Well, we needn't beat about the bush for that. But, m—m, it rather upsets my notions, does this letter. The fact is, Mr. Henderson, the letter itself is missing, and certain circumstances led us to think the envelope might have contained something of considerable value, and someone had got wind of it. But— m—m, I shall have to fall back upon another notion. On the night of the seventeenth two men engaged rooms at the Central Hotel, Liverpool, in the names of Henderson and Jenner; and in the light of the murder and the coincidence of the name on the flap of that envelope, their somewhat unusual behaviour has excited a good deal of interest in our minds." He paused a moment, glancing at his finger-nails; and Henderson bit the stem of his pipe fiercely. "Perhaps, too, if I mention that two men, who appear to have been the same as those at the Central, ran into one of our men at the corner of Brunden Place, Liverpool, at about half-past seven yesterday morning, it might occur to you exactly what that envelope actually *did* contain."

Henderson rose stiffly, and walked over to the window. He stared out into the street for some seconds, then turned slowly round and faced the detective.

"This interview is taking such a serious turn that I don't think it would be advisable to continue it," he said quietly. "Assuming the accuracy of the newspaper reports of the tragedy, it appears to me you are implying that I may be concerned in it."

"Not at all—just a little mystery we want cleared up," returned the detective reassuringly, as he rose and walked over to the fireplace. "I may say there is no doubt in our minds as to who murdered Mr. Bernstein. But that empty envelope constitutes a very peculiar feature of the case, and needs explaining. It arrived at the office at a moment when the old man was lying dead. It fell into the hands of a person or persons who were provided with burglaring tools, some of which were left behind; and it contained something of sufficient importance to be carried away by—probably two men who were in a great hurry to leave the court, who turned up soon after at the Central, had a brandy each, consulted a time-table, and left for London at once. You see yourself the mystery of that envelope demands attention. If it contained nothing more than the letter I have read, the business is stranger than ever; for it is inconceivable that anyone would trip from London to Liverpool simply to re-possess themselves—in the presence of a dead man—of an absolutely worthless letter."

Henderson rested himself on the window-ledge and stared down at his boots.

"Supposing——" he began thoughtfully, weighing each word. "Has it not occurred to your highly-trained mind that that envelope contained something quite different from what it should have contained—from what it was meant to contain?"

"Most certainly."

"The security mentioned in the letter, for instance?"

"That clears the air a bit," muttered the detective, after a thoughtful pause. He returned to the desk, picked up the letter-book, and read the page at which it was open. "I see. You made a rather dangerous mistake. And in order to recover the security——"

"I decline to say anything more about the matter until I know what is my precise position."

"Your precise position, Mr. Henderson, is a jolly sight better than you've any right to expect," answered the detective, with grave conviction. "If you had happened to look in at Bernstein's office a little earlier in the morning of the seventeenth and we could have proved how vitally important you regarded the contents of that envelope, you would unquestionably have been arrested under suspicion of having murdered the man, and it's quite likely the actual murderer, an old victim of Bernstein's questionable methods, would have escaped. But, as it is, the medical testimony makes it quite certain that the murder was committed while you and your friend were at the hotel; and as it would only create a cross-scent across our case against a man we hope to nip before the day's out, I don't think you're likely to hear anything from an official quarter about your burglaring adventure. At the same time, it must strike you that when a man puts on the shirt of a lawbreaker he's liable to find it a somewhat tight fit. But for the fact that we have an overwhelming case against someone else, the collar might have strangled you at eight o'clock sharp one morning."

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PICTURE PARAGRAPHS.

The Editor is always Pleased to Consider Photographs for this Feature.

A WHALE CAUGHT IN A CABLE.

A short while ago communication by submarine cable between Valdez, on Prince William Sound, Alaska, and Sitka, Alaska, was suddenly and mysteriously interrupted. The cable had been laid about a month before by the cable ship *Burmese*, under the direction of officers in the United States Signal Corps, and had been completely satisfactory up to the time of the interruption. Tests from the Sitka office showed that the trouble existed about ten miles out from Sitka.

The cable ship proceeded to Sitka to repair the damage on January 24th, 1905. As the cable was being heaved in, the dynamometer began to show considerable strain. This gave rise to the theory that the cable had entangled itself on a rock, and the vessel was accordingly manœuvred to free it.

Heaving in was slowly proceeded with, when the carcase of a whale appeared with a loop of the cable around its lower jaw.

By permission of "*Scientific American.*"

A whale caught in the Sitka-Valdez submarine cable.

By permission "*Scientific American.*"

Disentangling the whale from the cable.

The loop was twisted as well, thus securely holding the whale. In its struggles to escape the animal had badly twisted and torn the cable, making several breaks in the conductor, and thus interrupting communication. The carcase was badly decayed, and the odour it gave off rendered the task of freeing the cable a most unenviable one.

The steel armour wires, with the exception of three, were broken at the point where the loop round the whale's jaw twisted. It was only owing to the cable's great tensile strength (20,000 pounds) that it was not broken.

A splice was soon made, and communication between Sitka and Valdez restored.

The most plausible theory to explain this singular occurrence suggests that the whale was feeding along the bottom of the sea, and swimming slowly with its jaws open. As the cable was suspended on irregularities of the bottom, it naturally entered the whale's open mouth, and the animal, in its efforts to disengage itself, made a loop in the cable.

The whale measured some fifty feet, and was found in a depth of sixty-five fathoms.

One other case is known where a whale has caused an interruption in cable communication. In this instance, the scene of the damage was the Red Sea, and it was caused by a loop of the cable becoming caught in the whale's tail. Interruptions of submarine telegraphic communication by sea monsters occurs less frequently than might be imagined. When such an interruption does occur, however, it causes so much inconvenience that it is pleasant to reflect on the comparative rarity of the accidents.

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ARMING ANIMALS AGAINST DISEASE.

How Distemper May Be Defied.

During the past few years great efforts have been made to prevent disease in domestic animals by means of inoculation. Those who conducted the original experiments argued that if antitoxins were beneficial to mankind in general, they should also be equally useful in warding off disease from dogs and cats.

Photo The Scientific American.

Two veterinary surgeons inoculating a monkey with antitoxin.

Two years ago Mr. George Cugley, who has devoted his life to the study of animals, started experimenting with antitoxins intended for the lower orders of animal life, and he now claims to have attained complete success in this direction. The serum is simply injected hypodermically into the blood of the dog or other patient by means of a needle-pointed syringe.

The results in no way resemble those which are familiar to everyone who has been vaccinated. The animal does not "take," and there is no eruption on the skin. But the advocates of the system claim that the subject so treated is rendered proof against whatever disease it is desired to ward off.

Photo The Scientific American.

Injecting the serum into the blood of a dog.

There is naturally a large demand for distemper antitoxin. Although the name of "guaranteed cures" for this complaint is legion, animal dealers and other "doggy" men have come to the conclusion that execution is the best treatment for a dog smitten with distemper. The difficulty of curing the sufferer, and the tremendous trouble involved in treating him, together with the danger of other dogs catching the malady, make it poor economy to attempt to save the dog.

During the experiment for the discovery of an anti-distemper serum, healthy dogs, some inoculated and some not, were shut up with animals afflicted with the disease.

Not one inoculated dog contracted the malady, while the remainder did so freely. This seems to prove the efficacy of the new serum. Cats frequently undergo treatment from the hypodermic syringe, as there are many ailments to which they are subject which can be prevented in this manner.

Experiments are now being conducted in order to try to make rabies a thing of the past. It is argued that the disease is only contracted contagiously. This being so, it may be possible to discover an antitoxin that will kill the germ. Every dog could then be isolated, and rendered immune from the scourge.

All lovers of dogs would welcome heartily a really satisfactory antitoxin for rabies.

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Photo McLellan.

Two Fast Friends.

A PERILOUS PERCH.

WHAT PHOTOGRAPHERS DO IN ORDER TO SECURE UNUSUAL PICTURES.

EVEN here in England, in these hustling days of small wages, people are willing to undertake all manner of weird and wonderful jobs for a little money. But in America there's absolutely nothing a man will not do if only it gets him on in the world. The Yankee journalist is famous—one might even say notorious—for his tireless energy and unscrupulous zeal. To him nothing is too sacred for copy or too difficult to attempt. The same may be said of the Yankee photographer, especially the photographer connected with the Press. He will make almost any sacrifice of comfort and safety for the sake of a good vantage point for securing desirable pictures. In the present photograph one of these daring fellows is seen on part of the iron framework of a giant skyscraper taking a photograph of Broadway, the most populous street in New York.

Look at his position! He is seated on a narrow strip of iron.

How he got there heaven only knows!

The least slip and he would be dashed to pieces some three or four hundred feet below.

And all for the sake of a single photograph, that will probably be badly printed in one of the vast New York newspapers, and forgotten a day or two after its appearance!

A UNIQUE FRIENDSHIP.

A CAT AND DOG WHO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

THE greyhound and the cat in the accompanying photograph live a most touchingly peaceful life together. They are inseparables. They eat out of the same platter, they walk about the garden together, and, finally, they are very fond of seeking sweet repose in each other's arms. It was while they were taking their afternoon nap that the photographer took the pretty photograph.

This friendship is all the more singular because the greyhound is usually not at all partial to cats, and if ever they venture anywhere near him he soon drives them off.

Photo Underwood.

A photographer at work on the frame of a New York "skyscraper."

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Caught! The amount of damage to the person's leg depends on the strength of the spring and sharpness of the teeth.

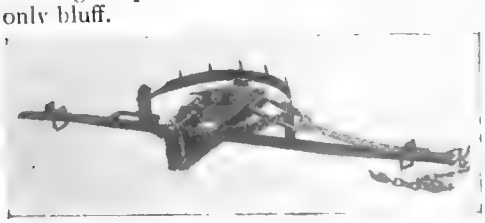
THE MAN-TRAP.

CONTRARY to the general belief, it is still legal for the owner of a house to set a man-trap inside his dwelling from sunset to sunrise, for the protection of his life and property.

The example shown in our photographs is over a hundred years old, and came from the marshland district of Yorkshire, where it was in use for many years. Now it is retained as a curiosity.

An active trade is carried on at the present time in the manufacture of man-traps, which are exported chiefly to the West Coast of Africa.

But you need never be afraid of a notice outside some private property or reserve warning trespassers of man-traps. These are only bluff.



A man-trap ready for a victim.

AUTOMOBILE SKATES.

M. CONSTANTINI, of Paris, has produced a type of motor-skates which he believes will seriously compete with the motor-car for public favour.

Each skate is fitted with a little box at the back containing the battery and spark coil. The petrol reservoir and the various switches for controlling the speed of the motors are attached to a belt which the skater wears; the petrol runs down to the skates through rubber tubes.

On setting out for a run, the operator turns on the supply of petrol, and then skates along the ground in the same way as he would do if he were mounted on roller-skates of the ordinary pattern. When a reasonable speed has been attained, he switches on the ignition current, and the motors begin to act. This is the moment when there is the greatest chance of a spill. If the skater does not lean forward when the motors start, his feet will be drawn from under him and the back of his head will come in sharp contact with the earth.

It is practically impossible for this kind of motor to run away with you. Even if something should go wrong, and you should be unable to cut off the ignition current, you have only to raise yourself on the front wheels—on your toes as it were — and the rear or motor wheels will race without touching the ground.

The speed attainable varies between three and twenty-five miles per hour.

Will wearers of these machines have to go about with numbers placarded on their backs?

Photo *Scientific American*

The thousand-league boots of the twentieth century.

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Mrs. Wrensley's Last Sale

An Uncomfortable Shopping Adventure.

By A. Hope.

Helen Wrensley came down to breakfast with her hat and coat on; forgot to give her husband any sugar in his coffee, passed him the milk-jug when he remonstrated about the sugar, and finally announced she was in a great hurry, as she had only just time to catch the train.

"Catch what train?" asked her husband. "And by the way, Helen, I wish you would speak to cook about the eggs; they are quite hard again."

"What a shame! I don't know what servants are coming to!" said Mrs. Wrensley absently. "Catch the train to town, of course, dear. I'm going to a sale."

Dr. Wrensley groaned.

"We shall be in the workhouse if you go to many more sales," he protested. "You have been to about a dozen this week already; I should have thought you had bought enough trash to last you a lifetime."

"Trash!" said Helen indignantly. "Some of the things I got are simply sweet, and I picked them up for half nothing. Look at that white chiffon blouse!"

"The crushed-up thing you showed me last night?" said Dr. Wrensley unsympathetically. "It looks as if it had been lying in the dust for months, and I don't believe it will even wash."

"Well, it will dry-clean," retorted Helen. "And look at those red dining-room curtains! I got them at Brown's, an absolute bargain; you can't deny it. I never saw such cheap curtains in my life."

"What's the good of that when we don't want red curtains at all?" objected her husband, unconvinced. "Our own are as good as new."

"They can be put by till we do want them, can't they? Curtains always come in useful. Anyhow, I haven't time to stay here arguing; I shall miss that train. Good-bye, dear!"

"Nonsense!" said her husband. "You have eaten no breakfast; you will have a cup of tea and a bun for lunch, I suppose, and you will come home fagged out, and looking more dead than alive. Give up the silly sale, for goodness' sake, and stay at home like a rational woman. Do Helen—to oblige me!"

"Impossible!" said Helen briskly. "I wouldn't miss this opportunity for worlds. Where is my catalogue? Oh, there it is; and my string-bag?—*that's* all right! Good-bye, dear."

Mrs. Wrensley adjusted her hat and veil before the glass over the mantelpiece, gave her husband a hasty kiss, and rushed out of the house.

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"There she goes!" he sighed helplessly. "She has eaten no breakfast, as I told her; but there is no reasoning with a woman who has cheap sales on the brain. Jackson's wife is just the same; it's a kind of mania with them evidently. Helen will make herself ill; but I can't prevent it."

He sighed again as he helped himself to a second piece of bacon.

* * * * *

There was the usual crowd outside Welshe & Merton's, the usual difficulty to get into the shop, or when inside to properly examine the various articles displayed for sale. But Helen was an old hand at the fray, and by dint of much pushing and elbowing, she managed to find exactly what she wanted, besides having the supreme satisfaction of securing, "greatly below cost price," a French model gown, which was considered one of the bargains of the day.

"And now I shall go," she decided. "I've got what I came for, and I don't want Jack to give me another lecture on extravagance. Except some gloves—I ought to buy just a few pairs of gloves—and then I can have lunch at the A. B. C. at the corner, and catch an early train back."

Helen felt in a particularly amiable frame of mind as she chose her gloves; even her husband would not be able to cavil at her new "sale" gown; it was quite fresh, and suited her admirably.

As she waited for her change, her attention was attracted by some waist-belts, which were hung up over a neighbouring counter.

"Has madam seen the new *suède* belts?" inquired the watchful attendant. "They are perfectly fitting, and we have them in all colours. They were 13s. 9d., and now they are marked down to 9s. 6d."

"They seem rather nice," said Helen doubtfully. "That grey one is pretty." She got up and walked over to examine it more closely, and the girl followed her.

"It's a lovely belt, and quite the newest shape," she told Helen persuasively.

Helen wavered. "It is cheap, of course; it was 13s. 9d. you say? Still, I have heaps of belts; I don't think I require another at present."

She returned to the glove counter with a slight glow of pride; she had been distinctly economical in not purchasing the article in question.

"Is this madam's string-bag?" asked the attendant, as she handed Helen the change.

"Oh, yes!" said Helen. "How careless of me; I must have left it here when I went to the other counter."

"And is this madam's umbrella?"

"Yes; thanks very much."

It struck Helen that the girl gave her rather a curious look as she left the department; but she did not attach any importance to it, and prepared to fight her way out of the shop, which was no easy matter, for the crowd was denser than ever.

Before she had reached the door a shopwalker came up and touched her on the arm.

"Will madam please step this way?" he said a low voice.

"Step this way?" said Helen surprised. "I don't want anything else; I am just leaving."

"All the same I think madam had better come with me—quietly!" he said. "The manager would like a word with her before she goes."

"This is perfectly ridiculous," began Helen; and then as people started to look round, she changed her mind.

"Very well, I will see the manager. But you have spoken to me in a most extraordinary way, and I shall require an explanation of your conduct!"

The man did not answer, and Helen, in mingled bewilderment and indignation, allowed herself to be conducted to the manager's office.

"This is the lady, sir," announced the shopwalker. Then he went out and closed the door after him.

The manager, a middle-aged man, immaculately dressed, got up as Helen was ushered into the room.

"By what right do you send for me like this?" began Helen haughtily. "One of your shop-walkers came up to me just now and said in the most peremptory way that you would like to speak to me, and even had the impertinence to suggest that I should follow him 'quietly.' Is the man mad? His behaviour certainly points to it, and I await your explanation."

The manager looked at her keenly.

"I don't think you need much explanation, madam," he said. "But if you press for it, I will put the matter briefly and bluntly. The game is up."

"*The game is up!*" said Helen. "Are you mad, too? What do you mean by this insolence?"

"I mean," replied the manager quietly, "that when a lady comes into this shop and takes away goods which she has not paid for, she cannot expect to be shown much

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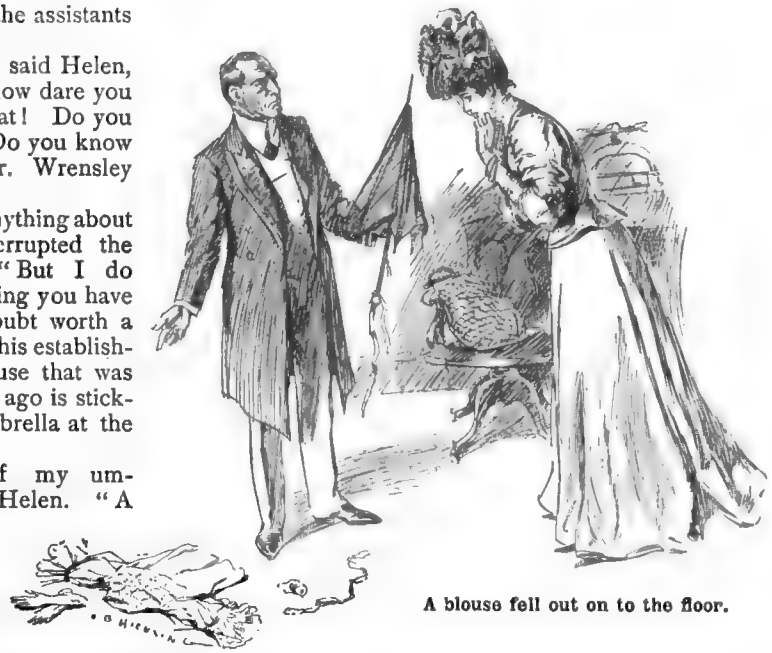
deference either by the assistants or by myself."

"How dare you!" said Helen, nearly choking. "How dare you speak to me like that! Do you know who I am? Do you know my husband is Dr. Wrensley of ——"

"I do not know anything about your husband," interrupted the manager coldly. "But I do know that this morning you have stolen goods, no doubt worth a large amount, from this establishment. Why, a blouse that was missed half-an-hour ago is sticking out of your umbrella at the present moment!"

"Sticking out of my umbrella!" exclaimed Helen. "A *blouse*—in my umbrella!"

"Surely, madam, this pretence has been carried far enough," struck in the manager impatiently. "Give me your umbrella!"



A blouse fell out on to the floor.

He took the umbrella, which was unfastened, and opened it; and as he did so, a blouse fell out on to the floor, as well as a quantity of smaller articles.

To say that Helen Wrensley was astonished would be to put the matter too mildly; for a second she was literally petrified.

"Have you anything to say now?" the manager asked her. "Do you still expect me to believe these things were bought and paid for?"

"But—how did they get there?" gasped Helen. "How *could* they have got there? Oh, you can't imagine, you can't possibly imagine, that *I* had anything to say to it?"

"I certainly can't imagine anything else," he responded drily. "You don't deny this is your umbrella, I suppose?"

Helen gave it a hasty glance.

"No, I don't deny that. Good Heavens! what am I to do?" Her voice trailed off despondently.

The manager took no notice of her last words and went over to a speaking-tube.

"Is Miss Banks there? Send Miss Banks to me immediately," he called; and then he addressed Helen.

"I do not know what other articles you may have concealed about your person; but it will be to your advantage to submit quietly while you are being searched," he told her.

"Being searched?" echoed Helen. "Oh, this is too awful—I am innocent, I tell you—perfectly innocent!"

There was a knock at the door, and a woman came in.

"There you are, Miss Banks," said the manager. "You will please search this lady thoroughly. I shall be within call."

Helen gave a little cry, and broke into a torrent of angry, frightened words; but she speedily found it was useless to protest. She set her teeth, and went through the degrading ordeal as calmly as she could, though when it was all over she felt sick and faint.

"I have found nothing, Mr. Reynolds," the woman announced when the manager came back.

"Very well, you can go," he replied curtly. "As to you," he said to Helen, who stood white and proud-looking against the table, "as to you, madam, I shall now call a constable and give you in charge. Thefts have been going on here lately in the most barefaced manner, and it is high time such practices were put a stop to. To tell me you know nothing about this particular theft is, of course, absurd, and I think you will find a magistrate will not be more ready to believe your story than I."

Helen sprang forward.

"Listen to me!" she said tensely. "You *shall* listen! Things are as black as possible against me, I know; but I have told you the

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simple truth, I know nothing about this horrible affair. To begin with, I am not a poor woman, I should have no earthly motive for doing a thing of the kind——"

"A lady came here last week and stole goods worth ten pounds," said the manager. "Her husband had a couple of thousand a year, yet that did not prevent her from trying to rob us. We were persuaded to hush the matter up, but we have hushed up these sort of episodes too often, and this time the thief shall not go scot-free."

His voice was inexorable, and Helen's heart sank. In a flash it came to her what it would all mean; the hateful publicity and scandal, the difficulty of proving her own innocence, perhaps the ruin of her husband's practice—and he had hoped to move to Harley Street next year.

She made a last desperate effort.

"Think well what you are doing," she said. "If you give me in charge you will be committing a grave wrong, and probably ruining yourself, for the whole thing is a mistake, and the truth is bound to come to light in the end. Here is my husband's card; he is a doctor, as I told you; at least let me telegraph to him, and keep me here until he comes. You can see I have no way of escaping, even if I wished to escape—you can lock me into this room if you choose. Only let me stay until I see my husband—you will regret it all your life if you do not!"

Helen had spoken quickly and vehemently, and now she stopped and looked up appealingly into the man's face. Had her words had any effect? She could read nothing in his countenance.

He went over to the window, and for a moment looked out in silence. Then he came back to her.

"Very well," he said ungraciously. "You can telegraph to your husband before I take further steps in the matter."

Helen bowed her head, she could not trust herself to speak. The manager was fully convinced of her guilt, but he had considered that after all it might be more prudent to see her husband before he put the case into the hands of the police. Helen was undoubtedly a lady, and she was noticeably well-dressed—his firm were not always anxious to proceed against their customers for shop-lifting when those customers were women of a certain position and standing. Last week, as he told Helen, a similar affair had been hushed up; perhaps this one might be hushed up, too; it would depend upon circumstances—and the husband.

He brought her a telegraph form, and Helen filled it up feverishly:

Come to me without delay. Very urgent indeed. Am at Welshe & Merton's, —— Street. Ask for the manager's office.

HELEN.

The manager presently disappeared, and a woman took his place, but not the woman who had searched her a quarter of an hour previously. Helen hardly noticed her presence, she was too absorbed in her own wretched thoughts. She remembered how short a time it was since she had come to this shop in the highest spirits, and now she was charged with theft, and on the eve of being arrested.

What could her husband do when he came? How could she ever clear her name from the stigma that rested upon it at present?

It had begun to rain hard, and big drops splashed against the window-pane and somehow heightened Helen's gloom. Her nerves were on edge; two or three times she felt as if she must scream aloud. Would Jack never come? What was going to happen to her?

She waited for two hours, and it seemed like two days. Then at last the door opened, and the manager came in—with Jack.

"What on earth is up?" said Dr. Wrensley irritably. "You send me a mysterious telegram, Helen, and you, sir, bring me in here in this confoundedly mysterious way——"

"Oh, Jack, Jack," began Helen in a heart-broken voice, and then she gave a great cry.

"Jack!" she said. "My umbrella! You have my umbrella, too!"

"Upon my word, Helen, I believe you've gone crazy," said her astounded husband; but Helen did not hear him, or notice that the manager was trying to interpose.

"Where did you get it? Where did you get it?" she repeated in a frenzy. "Where did you get that umbrella?"

"Get it? From the hall-stand, of course," said Dr. Wrensley. "You rushed out of the house at such a rate this morning that you forgot to take it, and as it was pouring with rain when I left home, I brought it along for you. Why Helen, HELEN!"

But he spoke to deaf ears. For the first time in her life Mrs. Wrensley broke into a raging fit of hysterics, crying and laughing, laughing and crying, till her husband began to doubt her sanity in good earnest.

When she recovered herself somewhat, she started to explain things, and the manager, who commenced to feel a little less sure of his ground, started to explain, too.

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Dr. Wrensley listened incredulously and wrathfully.

"And you thought that this lady—my wife—had stolen your blouses?" Like Helen, he nearly choked at the idea.

"The blouse and other things were in madam's umbrella," persisted the manager stubbornly.

"Madam's umbrella? It was not madam's umbrella at all," roared Dr. Wrensley. "I tell you my wife went without one to-day in her hurry—a very silly thing to do, as I've often warned her. The parlourmaid drew my attention to it first—said she was afraid her mistress would get wet as it was such a dark-looking day. You can see the girl herself, if you like!"

"But the umbrella that madam was carrying?" said the manager.

Dr. Wrensley looked at his wife.

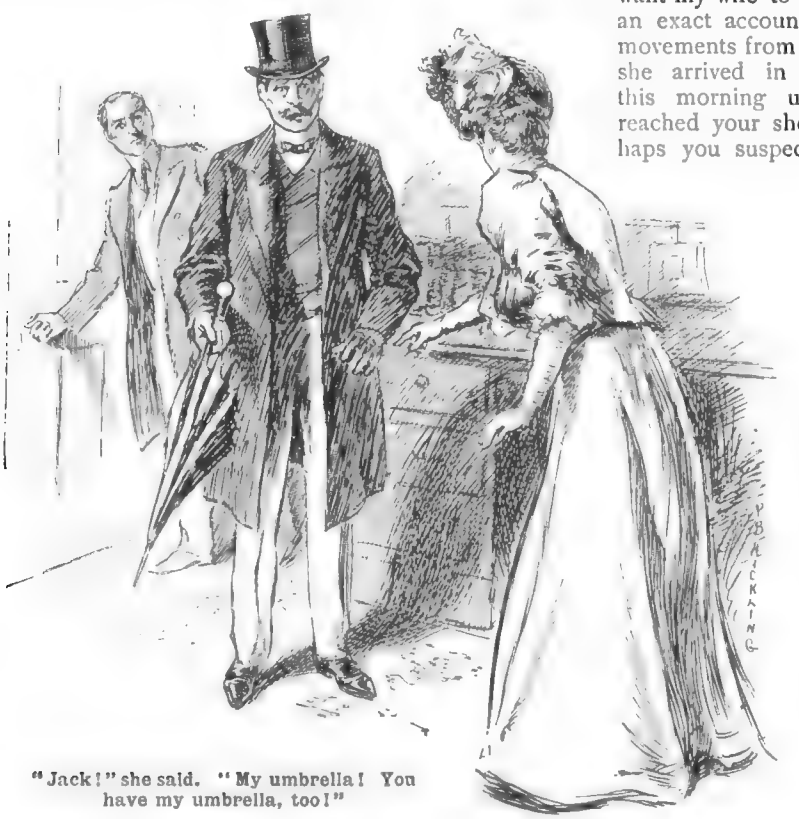
"Yes? How did you come to be carrying the other beastly thing?" he questioned. "How did you get hold of that?"

A light broke upon Helen.

"It couldn't have been mine at all," she exclaimed. "I remember now! I got up to look at some belts, and left my string-bag on the glove counter. The assistant pointed it out to me when I came back, and said: 'Is this also your umbrella?' or something of the kind. It was just like mine; exactly like mine; and I suppose I claimed it mechanically, and somehow forgot I hadn't brought one with me at all. Good Heavens, what a fool I've been!"

Dr. Wrensley turned to the manager.

"You hear what the lady says—or do you want my wife to give you an exact account of her movements from the time she arrived in London this morning until she reached your shop—perhaps you suspect her of having bought this second umbrella on the way, in order to fill it with your blouses and 'other things'? By the way, where *is* the other umbrella?"



"Jack!" she said. "My umbrella! You have my umbrella, too!"

"It is over in the corner," said the manager, who appeared more and more crestfallen. "If a regrettable mistake has been made——"

"*If?*" said Dr. Wrensley. "You had better be careful what you are saying, I think, sir! Fetch that second umbrella."

The manager fetched it quickly, and without further remarks.

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It was not astonishing that Helen herself had made a mistake; the two articles were pin for pin alike, and of rather an uncommon pattern; the handle of each was made of gold, finished off with a curious knob inlaid with dull green enamel.

"There is certainly not much to choose between them," allowed the doctor. "Are even the initials the same?"

"Initials?" said the manager. "Are madam's initials on her own umbrella?"

"Most decidedly they are." He showed the man the letters "H. W." engraved on one side. "Now let us see the other."

But on that point alone there was a difference—the other umbrella had no distinguishing mark.

"Are you satisfied now that my wife is not a thief?" said Dr. Wrensley scornfully. "The umbrella she picked up evidently belonged to some other woman; the woman who really stole your property. Whether this person let it go out of her hands on purpose, or by accident, is no business of mine; but what concerns me is, that you owe this lady a most thorough and complete apology for what has transpired. It seems to me that if we brought the affair into court——"

"Oh, not that—for goodness' sake, not that!" interposed Helen.

"I have no words to express my deep regret that this very—lamentable—error should have occurred," said the manager. "I quite see now that it *has* been an error; and I offer madam my most humble and sincere apologies. But, if I may be permitted to point out, the fault was not entirely mine—the circumstance was so extraordinary, the coincidence so remarkable!"

"Oh, yes, yes," said Helen. "But all I want now, is to *go*—to leave this horrible shop for ever! Come, Jack, I simply *refuse* to stay any longer!"

"If you will have the goodness to leave me your card, sir, I will write to you more fully," said the manager.

And Dr. Wrensley, still fuming, was obliged to take his leave without more ado.

Outside Welshe & Merton's he signalled a hansom.

"Have you had any lunch?" he asked his wife.

"Lunch? no! but I wouldn't eat anything, I couldn't touch anything——"

"The Trocadero!" called Dr. Wrensley to the driver. "As fast as you can get there."

"You are not going home until you have had your lunch," he informed her grimly. "And it won't be a cup of tea and a bun, I promise you. You are looking like a ghost this minute! *Hang* those cheap-sales!" But he did not say "hang!"

"Of course, it wasn't really the fault of the sale—this might have happened at any time," said Mrs. Wrensley feebly.

From the hansom she caught sight of some flaming window-bills: "JANUARY SALES! ENORMOUS REDUCTIONS!!"

"But I shall always loathe sales all the same!" she shuddered. "I will never go to another as long as I live."

"Amen to that," said her husband. "And here we are at the Trocadero, thank goodness!"

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A DAY *in the Life of a* NORTH SEA MISSIONARY.

By "Sky-Pilot."

A Description of one of the Strangest Duties of the Church.

It is Sunday, and the time for service is at hand. But there is no sound of bells, there is no sign of church or chapel, there are no streets, no people afoot, on wheel or riding. Yet there is a place of worship and there is a congregation, and already the worshippers are preparing for the service. When we speak of worshippers we think mostly of girls or women, for in these days they are supreme in congregations. There is no church because there is no land, and for the same reason streets are wanting; there are no women within many leagues, since we are in a region to which no woman ventures willingly.

My diocese or field of operations is the grey North Sea and that famous fatal part of it which is called the Dogger Bank. My bethel is a steamboat, and one the like of which was never known until the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen put it on the waters. It is the triumph of the seemingly impossible, the combination of business with religion, and of a vast humanity with both.

The table at which I sit and write is my pulpit, almost within reach of my hand is a dispensary, a few feet away are swing cots and fixed bunks, an X-ray installation, and everything that skill and money can provide for the healing of the sick and the care of the dying. "Heal the sick," says the scroll on each bow of the noble little ship. "Preach the Word," another written title orders, and incircling the steering-wheel is the text: "Jesus saith, follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." These, if I needed a reminder of my simple subjects for a sermon, stand for all that North Sea trawlers rank as creed.

It is here, in this very place of worship, that the wounded fishermen were brought and tended after that monstrous outrage by the Russian Baltic Fleet two years ago; by this very pulpit the Mission surgeon plied his knife and needle, helped by Skipper Joseph William White and his crew, and it is of this cabin that the doctor wrote: "With all these wounded men on board, our floating hospital looked like a veritable battlefield. Indeed, it presented a most pathetic sight."

It was in one of these cots, too, not many months ago, that a still form lay, as the ship

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ran home to the nearest port—the form of the mate. A savage sea had struck the vessel, swept him overboard, thrown him back again, as seas occasionally do, and cast him down a corpse on the very spot where, a moment earlier, he had been a strong North Sea man in the prime of life.

I put my writing gear away, because the congregation is assembling, not in Sunday clothes or holiday attire, but in the wonderful garb of the fishermen, who come straight from their ceaseless toil to seek a little change and rest from their giant's labours of the week. The trawler wears his heavy seaboots, his enormous stockings, his thick blanket trousers, his guernsey or jumper, and the headdress that may be cap, battered hat, Tam-o'-shanter or simply matted hair. And he comes from his steam trawler by way of his broad, deep boat, ferrying as he stands, facing the bow or stern. He gets alongside, and his thick painter is made fast on board, and while he stays in the ship his little vessel tows and surges through the sea, ready at any moment to carry him back to his floating home. He may not approve of the missionary—sometimes he does not, and as he waives ceremony, and does not stand on the order of his going, he will rise without warning, climb on deck, tumble into his boat, get his painter cast loose and return home.

Get into your mind the meaning of North Sea trawling nowadays and you will understand the sort of man who has to be dealt with and the kind of church and parson that he needs. His little steamboat is his home all the year round—soft, warm summer and cruel, bitter winter—except for such few days as are needed for the run back to port from his fleet to recoal and refit. Year in and year out, fair weather and foul—and the Dogger weather is very wicked—he is at work, one of a floating population of a round five hundred souls.

The work is such that landsmen who see it, however often, and who study it, however long, may well stand aghast at its hardships. It is shoot and haul, gut and sort, wash and box, string down and tally, get into the boat, and ferry to the carrier for conveyance to market. Three hauls daily—early in the morning, again in the afternoon, and once more at midnight; with all the enormous labour incidental to the making ready of the fish for the dealer. This is the day's work—toiling on the deep indeed—with no Sunday off, no holiday; so that however willing the spirit may be there is little time for prayer and praise.

But there are enough to form a congregation, and every rank of deep sea toiler is assembled—skipper, mate, boatswain, third hand, fourth hand, "deckie," engineer, fireman, cook. There is no priority of pew, no reserving of seats, no placing of the poor unwashed in draughts. Not I, at any rate, would care to be the verger who tried to differentiate between the North Sea worshippers; not mine should be the feeble hand that tried to restrain the great, bronzed fist which packs the short-stemmed clay with shag; not mine the voice which sought to whisper "Sh!" when the gruff notes of a speaker broke upon the service in condemnation of the luck of trawling. Missionary I may be, but I have my limitations, and I know that the humblest of my congregation is a lord of the Dogger.

The service must be short and to the point, because time is limited, and very soon the admiral of the fleet will give the signal for the trawls to be shot, and the steamboats, which are now clustering restfully together, must steam away and tow their gear astern. So there is an opening hymn, a prayer, another hymn, a little talk which you may call sermon, speech, address, or what you will, another hymn, and a closing prayer, then a speedy scattering of the congregation to their steamboats, and a hastening of the worshippers to resume their ceaseless toil as fleeters.

Now comes the time when the missionary may get his finest chance of doing useful work, and that is by going on board some of the steamboats and having a little, quiet chat with those members of the crew who may be partial to his ministrations.

I tumble into our boat, which is towing alongside. The skipper and the third hand, when we have steamed down near enough to our quarry, let the painter go and row me to a bobbing little vessel which has her gear down and is dragging it slowly through the water, on the sea-bed about a hundred feet below us, for we are fishing on the tail-end of the Dogger. She is moving at something less than three miles an hour, yet slow though the speed is and calm the weather it is astonishing how active one must be to clamber over her low bulwarks without injury or ignominy. Keep your fingers inboard, or they will be crushed out of shape between your boat and the ship; watch your chance when a wave uplifts you, and do not disdain the kind, strong grip of the skipper, or swift and thudding is your downfall on a slimy deck.

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I advance to a strangely-clad figure, which seems to be a human form enveloped in a sack, and wears that and a pair of boots and a soft hat as Sabbath dress. A short clay pipe is stuck between the teeth and a smile of welcome is on the bronzed and cheerful face. My own mere shore hand is grasped with a wincing grip and I am welcomed by my friend the skipper. I climb on to the bridge with him, I descend into the engine-room, I tumble below into the fish-room, sidle into the stifling stoke-hole, and eventually enter the cabin, the tiny floating home with its triangular table set for dinner, and the diners already seated for their meal.

To those who want no truck with me I may at least shout a "What cheer!" by way of a North Sea greeting.

There are cheery greetings, a pushing forward, oblivious of my presence, of the ceremony of refreshment, a hearty invitation to fall to, and no offence taken when I plead that want of time prevents me from accepting it. A few brisk sentences pass between us, a hope that all will be well at home, for the ship has burnt up her coal and is running to port to bunker afresh, then a brief good-bye, a jump into the boat, a tow down until another wanted ship is handy, and a brisk row until she is reached and boarded.

So I go from one to the other of the steamboats where I know that I am welcome, and to those who want no truck with me I may at least shout a "What cheer!" by way of a North Sea greeting, knowing that the salutation will be returned, and that some gruff and for the present unconquerable trawler will gladly recognise the humanity of the Mission ship, even if he is not partial to what he fears will be a sermon. During all these flying visits I must take my chance of planting a word in season and of doing something, however little, to extend that marvellous work which the Mission inaugurated more than twenty years ago, and which has proved more practically beneficent than the operations of any other kindred organisation in existence.

That may sound a sweeping statement, but I have abundant evidence of its truth. I know the old sailing days, I remember when the fleets were made up of smacks only, with the steam carriers travelling regularly between them and the London market; I remember the death-dealing *coper*, and have sailed in an old smack when I and deckie were the only sober pair on board. And between whiles I have been out and about and have seen what the mission work has done, so I am able, at any rate to compare the present with the past, and to understand exactly what this North Sea revolution means.

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A living witness of the change welcomes me when I step aboard another steamboat. He is the skipper, and when our greetings are over and our chat is ended, I lure him on to the recital of the way they did things in the wild days of old.

"So you saw a *coper*, did you, when you were lookin' for the fleet? Well, he still prowls about the North Sea, but he steers wide o' the fleets, an' only does business wi' the single-boaters. He never shows his nose amongst the fleeters—daren't do it; an' he isn't wanted. Many's the smart smack 'at's been lost through him, many the home 'at's been ruined, many the life 'at's been lost. Time after time I've spent my last penny on board of the old Dutchman, an' when we've had no money left I've seen boat-loads o' gear ferried to him from the smacks to swop for drink. He did a roarin' trade in the old sailin' days, when for days together smacks couldn't fish because there was no breeze. An' when time hangs heavy you get the itch for mischief.

"It isn't very many years since I was fleetin' off the Dutch coast. The *coper* had been very busy amongst us, for we could do nothing, owin' to the weather, but drink, drink, drink. Suddenly some of us determined to go ashore for a spree, so we rigged up the smack's mizzen-tops'l on an oar an' got over the three miles that lay between us an' a Dutch island. There were ten of us when we started, an' we went steadily at it day an' night till we had proper skinsful, I can tell you. Then somehow there were only two of us left. We hadn't had a bite to eat—it was sup, sup, sup all the time, an' we were ravenous. But it was night, an' there were no places open. A trifle like that didn't count, so we went explorin', an' seein' a nice little cottage with a big tree growin' up alongside an' overhangin' a bedroom window, we swarmed up the trunk. I clambered on a branch that touched the window an' tumbled in. Then you might ha' thought the end of all things had come, for there were two women asleep in the place, one old an' t' other young. An' they both rushed to the window an' raised squalls 'at fetched out all the police an' people in the place. I can't tell you how it happened, but my pal had disappeared an' I was left all alone to face it out as best I could.

"Well, they talked a lot an' shouted a lot. I told 'em my tale, an' they told me theirs, but they talked foreign, so we couldn't understand one another. However, there was no mistakin' what they meant, especially as they began firin' pistols, an' makin' it plain 'at if I didn't get back to my boat it 'ud be all the worse for me. So I cleared out as far as the beach, an' there I saw my pal with his feet in the flood tide, an' a' empty spirit bottle clasped in each hand, sleepin' calmly on the sand, an' just within an ace o' bein' drowned—not that he'd ha' cared, for he wasn't in a state to care for anything. I hauled him high an' dry an' then left him an' slipped away to try an' get some breakfast. I hadn't touched food for three days an' three nights, an' when a man's like that he doesn't care even for police with pistols.

"I wandered about an' wandered about till I came to a likely-lookin' little restaurant. I slipped in, an' findin' only one or two people lookin' after the place, I began to tell 'em what I wanted. What wi' their fright an' their botherin' foreign lingo, I couldn't make 'em understand, so I fell back on signs, an' that worked 'em. But the worst o' them foreign breakfasts is 'at they don't satisfy you—what's rolls an' coffee for a man to start the day on? However, I drank their coffee an' ran through their rolls in a way 'at amazed 'em, an' left 'em without any for anybody else. I wasn't satisfied, but there was nothing more to eat, so I had to stop.

"Now, you must understand 'at I hadn't a coin of any sort in my pocket—it had all gone in drink; but the way I looked at it was 'at they'd got my money amongst 'em somewhere, and I hadn't got vally for it, so I wasn't troubled much on that point. However, they'd been very kind, an' when I clearly saw 'at they wouldn't hear o' bein' paid, an' 'at they begged me, in their foreign way, not to mention it, I made a big pretence o' feelin' in my pockets for the money. At last I thanked 'em very kindly and left 'em, an' they came down to the beach to see us both off, an' gave a very willin' shove to the boat when we got her afloat again. The police had a wonderful lot to say, an' we could plainly see 'at if we went back we shouldn't be welcomed. The fleet had gone, becos a breeze had sprung up; but we came across a single-boater, an' he kept us aboard till we picked our own smack up again.

"Well, there you are. That's a little yarn o' the way we used to amuse ourselves in the old days—an' not so very long ago, mind you—before the Mission drove the *coper* off the Dogger an' provided beautiful ships where we can get tobacco at cost price—one an' two a pound, an' magazines an' papers to read, an' med'cine, an' where, when a man is ill, he can be looked after by a doctor an'

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pulled round without havin' to go home, an' ten to one losin' his berth.

"Look at me—am I any the worse becos I never drink anything stronger nor tea, an' go on board the Mission ship nowadays for a change, instead o' visitin' that old Dutchman's *coper* an' drinkin' the awful, murderous stuff that drove even North Sea smacksmen mad? Why, it's only a few weeks since one o' the *coper's* skippers wrung his hands an' said 'at the Mission had completely ruined him. 'Before it came,' he said, 'I could live without working. Now I'm forced to fish.'"

So I go from ship to ship, chatting with smacksmen of all ages and ranks, now listening to a merry tale of adventure, but more often to some recital which fills me with the gloom that is evermore the spirit of the Dogger—some story of a great or small disaster without which no month of the year can pass.

It may be some such overwhelming calamity as the great gale in March, 1883, when forty-five smacks were totally lost, eighty-nine were more or less damaged, and hundreds of men and boys perished. In Hull alone on that black day nearly 200 wives were made widows.

It may be a lesser storm which is called nothing worse than a "smart breeze," but which will claim its ships and lives, it may be some shocking accident which no foresight can avert—such, for instance, as that sudden tautening of a steel wire trawl-warp, which in a second decapitated one man and cut another in two; it may be a crushed limb, a smashed hand, a poisoned finger, a shocking open sore, a maddening visitation of neuralgia or toothache, or the sufferings of men whose hardships make them specially liable to ailments, in spite of their powerful constitutions. It may be, and often is, some sad recital of suffering patiently borne at home by the wife or children who are seen just two or three times in the course of a year, with whom, perhaps, out of the entire fifty-two weeks, not more than a fortnight in all is spent.

Can I wonder that so often wistful eyes are turned to me and that a long, deep sigh accompanies the expression of the words: "I wish *I* was goin' home with you"?

When I return to the Mission ship I can employ the afternoon in meeting the men who are able to get away from their own vessels while the trawl is down, and in making ready for the evening service. Now I give place to the real North Sea missionary, for, when all has been said of the earnest visitor who endures the dangers and discomforts of the Dogger, your truest worker comes from the ranks of the trawlers themselves. And how can it be otherwise, for is he not the only man who, in spirit and in truth, understands the thoughts, the fears, the aspirations, and the temptations of his fellow-toilers of the deep? He has been one of them from the outset, and he of all speakers best fathoms the secret of appealing to their hearts.

Such a fishermen's missionary takes charge, while the steamboat slips slowly through the water and the waves drowsily lap her sides. Nowhere else in the world to-day will you find such a preacher or such a congregation. There is the skipper-missionary, with his fine, bold face crowned with curly locks, his jersey showing the muscles of his powerful arms; around him are the worshippers, amongst them the strongest man in the fleet—another tribute to the civilising influence of the Mission, for whereas two or three years ago this splendid fellow would have retaliated swiftly at a fancied insult, now he will pass lightly by a jeer or jibe and show a noble magnanimity towards an enemy.

Here are the worshippers—straight from the business of shooting the trawl this peaceful Sabbath evening, and in their working garb they sing and talk and pray. And such singing it is! A very hurricane of voices raised in tune, the voices that often ring hoarsely in the furious gale, and that give, as only such men can give, the real interpretation to the chorus—

Throw out the Life-line!
Throw out the Life-line!
Someone is drifting away:
Throw out the Life-line!
Throw out the Life-line!
Someone is sinking to-day.

You might almost feel moved to rush on deck and hurl a line out into the black night as you hear the voices—and there is this significant feature in the singing, that the songmen, one and all, have themselves done that which they are calling upon their comrades to accomplish. There is not a trawler present who has not been at hand-grip with death on this hungry, ruthless Dogger which is the graveyard of the North Sea.

One of them has seen at least twenty individual men drowned, to say nothing of the wholesale death-sweep of a gale, so that it is from their hearts indeed that they sing that composition which is symbolic of the danger of their daily lives. And who can remain unmoved when he hears the appeal for mercy and forgiveness and the prayer on behalf of the little ones who see their father so

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seldom, that when he goes ashore they scarcely know him? On land, being a superior person, you might almost smile at some of the things which are spoken in the homely addresses, some of the expressions that are used, as, for instance: "What Christ meant was that every tub must stand on its own bottom"; but out here, in the very heart of the North Sea, lonely on the waste of waters, far from land, and seldom seeing ships except your own, you understand the tragedy and pathos of it all, and the very thought of merriment is cause for shame.

When the service is ended there is a brief turning in, to await the call to haul the trawl just before midnight. You, being a mere missionary, may sleep on and take your rest; but your congregation must get the fish ready to ferry to the carrier, with the morning catch as well, and this may mean a three or four hours' spell of hard work. Work a lot, sleep a bit, eat and drink, smoke your pipe, and snatch a little reading and recreation—that is the trawler's programme in fine weather; while as for the dreaded months of winter they are only to be endured because of the hope of better days when spring and summer come again.

I talk of a "day" in the life of a North Sea missionary; but that is a mere figure of speech. A man ashore, whatever his position may be, can tell approximately when one day ends and the next begins, but the North Sea trawler differs from him in this—that he knows scarcely any line of demarcation, unless it be, indeed, the rising and the setting of the sun, and that is merely nominal.

His day begins when he runs out to rejoin his fleet for a month or so, and sets his steaming watches, to be followed by the fishing watches, when he picks his comrades up again; and his day ends only when he is in port again for twenty-four hours or so, just long enough to recoal and get fresh stores in.

So it happens that the North Sea missionary may reckon that his day begins when he sets foot on board his vessel, and ends only when he is ashore again. And, however long that day may be—a week, a month, or more—he is never wanting in opportunity for lending a helping hand to the deep-sea fisherman. The body is as much his charge as is the soul, and he may do splendid service in assisting the doctor, if one is on board—and he is seldom absent from the Mission ship—or the skipper, who is a wonderful combination of trawler, seaman, surgeon and parson.

Landsmen do not know—they have no means of learning—what the North Sea trawlers suffer all the year round from greater or lesser ailments. It may be a poisoned hand or finger, a terrible sore which has little chance of healing, since the patient is ceaselessly at work, dragging at the nets or performing heavy duties which allow no rest to bone and flesh. A trifling wound, to all appearance, may be an injury of the most dangerous nature. Such a case quite lately presented itself for treatment to a Mission surgeon. A man came on board and showed his finger.

"Doctor," he said, "I've hurt it a bit by catchin' it on a wire rope"—little strands stick out like nails if the rope is frayed, and in the darkness they are unseen.

The doctor examined the finger. "I think," he said, "you had better go to London with the carrier and have this looked after in hospital."

The man demurred, it meant loss of time and work, and the injury seemed so trifling. But the doctor is all powerful—and he understands. The man left the fleet and sailed with the carrier for London. In three days he was dead, a victim to virulent blood poisoning. But so long as there is a possibility of dealing with the cases on board they are kept, and many a trawler has cause to bless the Mission steamer, not merely for restoring him to health, but also for getting him well quickly and enabling him to remain with the fleet and keep his work.

The missionary's "day" demands that he shall do something in the fine weather to amuse his fellow fishermen, and he can best do this by cheerfully agreeing to learn their artless games. These are wondrous inventions, such as "buzznap" and "cockadoodledoo," with the commonplace devices of cockfighting and other landsmen's games.

"Buzz-nap" and "cockadoodledoo" have a more or less common basis. In the latter the missionary is beguiled into bobbing his head between a pair of palms. The chief operator, say the skipper of our ship, makes a loud, crowing noise and extends his palms. It is the other player's object to jerk his head down swiftly and jerk it up again, and to escape the sudden meeting of the skipper's palms on his cheeks—if he can. About once in ten ducks he triumphs, and by that time the onlookers are delirious with joy. As for "buzznap," the missionary—he is really the victim—holds a stick. The skipper, with fearsome noises and movements, buzzes about the weapon, his object being to snatch it and smite your palm, and yours to jerk your hand

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away before he can carry out his felonious purpose.

His swiftness is marvellous, and if once in half-a-dozen times you escape a tingling whack you are fortunate indeed. But what greater consolation for your suffering could you desire than the loud hilarity of the audience? The very pup which the skipper has brought to sea revels in your downfall.

You will see what sort of man is needed to do mission work on the Dogger. No kid gloves, or ties, or collars, or fancy headdress; the oldest, strongest boots and clothes will suit you best, and you will prosper in proportion as you leave your finicky ways at home.

The skipper, with fearsome noises and movements, buzzes about the weapon, his object being to snatch it and smite your palm, and yours to jerk your hand away before he can carry out his felonious purpose.

They tell in the fleets—where your visits are remembered vividly—of a good man who went out amongst the trawlers in a silk hat and with an umbrella—the latter, it was said, to keep the gales off. The inevitable jest of sitting on the hat was perpetrated; but the fate of the umbrella is unknown.

They tell also of the good man who went out and became a victim to the weather. They sought to cheer him, but he refused to be comforted. They became alarmed when they saw his drawn and pallid face after he had been earnestly gazing at the sea, over the side.

"What in the world's the matter?" they asked.

"My—my teeth have gone, too!" he answered.

And they tell, further, but not quite so humorously, of a West End curate who ventured out into the stormy wilds. He had a gun with him, a revolver, and a bowie-knife.

"What do you want with these things?" asked a skipper.

"They—they told me when I left home," the curate stammered, "that you North Sea trawlers are such desperate fellows—and—and—that I should need them!"

And this of men who reckon it as part of their day's work to throw their small boat into the savage seas and rescue foreign crews from sinking ships, when those crews are too paralysed with terror to try to save themselves! And of men who do not expect—and often do not get—even so much as "Thank you" for their valour!

Even as I finish writing my story a letter reaches me from my friend the Mission skipper, who is taking his ship round the coast as a floating bazaar. Kind visitors, seeking knowledge, have been asking many strange questions.

"How far from the land do you suppose we work?" the skipper asked.

"Ten miles!" was the startling answer.

"And where do you think the fishing fleets come from?" he continued.

"London!" was the prompt reply.

No North Sea fishing fleet sails from London, and at this moment you must go nearly four hundred miles from Billingsgate before you can join one.

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THE HOUSE AT UPSEA

A Grim Tale of Plot and Counterplot.

By Geo. A. Best.

I.

Mr. Abraham Adams had made for himself a great name in the neighbourhood of Barkingside. Originally the proprietor of several ready-made clothing establishments in the Northern suburbs, he had retired from business at an exceptionally early age, and becoming utterly weary of the inactive and monotonous existence of a suburban "gentleman," he eventually embarked upon a career which was quite unique in character, and distinctly lucrative.

One of the lower rooms of the Barkingside homestead had been furnished with a roll-top desk, a perpetual calendar, and a copying press. It also contained the imposing volumes of an encyclopædia set in a revolving case (which Mr. Adams often amused himself by spinning round and round when clients were scarce and nobody was looking) numerous handbooks on poultry-rearing, bee-keeping, and gardening; two heavily-upholstered chairs, and a map of the world printed in ten different colours. This apartment was Abraham's office, and here he sat from 10 a.m. till 4 p.m., on five days of the week, to receive clients from all parts of East London.

Mr. Adams described himself as a "professional adviser." The few other professional men in his own neighbourhood called him a bogus solicitor, a quack doctor, and a general humbug. But in spite of these hard names, the "inquire within" business which Mr. Adams had established became, in time, a really flourishing concern; and the demand for expert advice, retailed at one shilling per subject, proved without doubt that the vocation of "general humbug" was not by any means overcrowded or played out.

In appearance Abraham Adams was tall, lean, hawk-eyed, and clean-shaven. Apart from an abnormally prominent and hooked nose, his features suggested a cheap caricature of Sherlock Holmes. This resemblance, which had been frequently commented upon by admiring and grateful clients, Mr. Adams took great pains to cultivate and increase.

Abraham was engaged in dusting his revolving book-case at 9.45 on a certain spring morning when the first caller entered his office, unannounced. The visitor was a very small man, with a thin crop of hair, heavily oiled, bushy side-whiskers tinged with grey, and a nervous, hesitating manner. He sat down on the extreme edge of the visitor's chair, and coughed apologetically.

"You're early, sir," said Abraham coldly, consulting his watch. "I don't usually commence business before ten."

"Couldn't 'elp myself," said the little man. "I'm being fairly eaten up by what is on my mind. Couldn't sleep a wink last night, and sat up all the night before. It's just killin' me."

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"Unless you require a specific for insomnia, I think we're wasting time," said Abraham drily. "Let's get to business. In the first place, what is your name?"

"Snooks—Paddington Snooks," answered the client. "An' I'm a retired dancin'-master. I've done well—uncommon well, I may say—in the profession, an' it's bin the dream of my life to own a double-fronted 'ouse, overlookin' the sea—a double-fronted 'ouse with a flag-staff in the garding and ivy creepin' up the walls."

Mr. Snooks raised his right hand slowly to imitate the gradual growth of the ivy.

"A 'ouse, moreover, with a balcony leadin' out of the best bedroom, double bays and a tiled 'all," he continued, checking the desired items off, one by one, on the fingers of his right hand. "Me an' my wife have bin to see scores of double-fronted 'ouses at the seaside durin' the last year. Some of 'em 'ad ivy and a flagstaff in the garden, without the tiled 'all; others 'ad the tiled 'all an' the balcony with the ivy—one 'ad everything I wanted to make me 'appy except the double bays."

"And you wish me to find you a place which agrees in every detail with your mental specification?" asked Abraham. "I'm afraid, in that case——"

"Not at all!" interrupted Snooks. "I know you ain't a 'ouse agent, Mr. Adams, an' I wouldn't insult you by suggestin' that you was. The fact is, I've actually discovered the very place," he continued with dramatic earnestness. "Tiled 'all, creepin' ivy, double bays, balcony, and flagstaff. Faces the mouth o' the Medway, an' stands in its own grounds. It's the dream of my life, passed away before my eyes into other 'ands! Sold for seven 'undred an' fifty pounds to a neighbour o' mine, within 'alf-an-hour of the time that I called upon the late owner."

Mr. Snooks paused, and tugged mournfully at his side-whiskers.

"Well, and what do you wish me to do in the matter?" asked Abraham with some show of interest.

"Suggest some practical scheme for makin' my friend Ogle sell his new 'ouse to me," answered Snooks eagerly. "I've offered 'im seven seven five on the nail, but 'e says 'e won't part with the property for a thousand. It's pure cussedness on 'is part, that's what it is, Mr. Adams. *He* 'adn't set 'is 'eart on a tiled 'all an' double bays, an' the ivy doesn't count. Any other 'ouse by the sea would have done George Ogle just as well, but 'e's as hard as bricks. The more 'e sees I want it, the more pig-'eaded he gets."

"Naturally," remarked Abraham sagely. "That's human nature, Mr. Snooks. You say that this man Ogle is a friend of yours?"

"He was before I called 'im a dog in the manger," replied Snooks. "Now we both cross the road when we see each other coming," he added intelligently.

"Ogle has not yet left London, then?"

"No, 'e's movin' to Upsea next week. Was goin' on Friday, but put it off till Tuesday because Friday's unlucky."

"Ah!" ejaculated Abraham, with a mysterious and self-satisfied smile. "That simplifies matters."

"Have you got a clue, then?" said Snooks hopefully.

"I have an idea, Mr. Snooks."

"Which is?" demanded Snooks, leaning forward in his chair with bulging eyes.

"How much can you pay?" asked Abraham quietly.

The chair fell into its normal position with a thud.

"Would a five-pound note do you, Mr. Adams?"

"No."

"Seven-pun'-ten, p'raps."

"My out-of-pocket expenses would come to more than that, Mr. Snooks. The scheme is an expensive one, and risky, too. I want ten pounds down, and an additional five pounds when the villa passes into your hands."

"Fifteen pounds!" Mr. Snooks scratched his bald head with some violence. "It's a lot of money," he said doubtfully.

"Ten pounds less than the twenty-five which you have already offered to Ogle for transferring the house to you," said Abraham. "By the way, is Ogle's heart sound?"

"His 'eart? Oh, I believe so. But what's that got to do with it?"

"He might die suddenly!" suggested Abraham darkly. "In that case you must take all responsibility."

Mr. Snooks gasped.

"Surely you don't mean no violence—it ain't anything in the nature of—of murder?" he asked in a horrified whisper.

"Murder be——" Mr. Adams checked himself suddenly and swallowed the expletive. "No, it isn't murder, Mr. Snooks," he said quietly. "Personal violence isn't exactly in my line—not at fifteen pounds a time, anyway."

"Oh! that's all right, Mr. Adams," said Paddington Snooks, much relieved. "Of course I never thought—anyway, I'll agree to

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your terms, on your own assurance that there ain't nothin' of what you might call a criminal nature in the scheme."

"I'll draw up the agreement, then," said Abraham, "and give you a receipt for ten pounds on account."

When Snooks had signed the somewhat lengthy document prepared by his professional adviser, Adams assumed his most approved attitude, and, lighting a cigarette, handed his case to the expectant client.

"You say that Ogle wouldn't remove on a Friday, therefore I infer that he is somewhat superstitious," he began. "My idea is to frighten him away from the property—to give him a bad scare."

Abraham paused impressively and gazed keenly at his client.

"Spooks?" hazarded Snooks nervously.

"Something in that line," replied Adams. "Death watches, midnight wailings, and the clanking of chains," he added in a thick whisper. "Weird rappings and blood-curdling shrieks. Do you follow me?"

"I think so; but 'ow is it to be managed?"

"By brains, sir," answered Abraham, tapping his forehead significantly. "Brains, backed up by courage combined with a little ingenuity and much tact—that's the recipe?"

"But who's got to clank the chains and 'owl?" asked Snooks, pursing his lips. "Wot's got to rap, an' tick, an' do the blood curdlin'?"

"That!" exclaimed Adams, pointing to a phonograph which occupied a small table in the bay window of his office,

He leant back in his chair and laughed triumphantly.

"But the ordinary records won't do," argued Snooks. "There ain't anything on sale which is 'alf ghastly enough."

"We make our own records, of course," said Abraham. "I have half-a-dozen blank cylinders in stock, so we can begin at once."

He rang a table bell as he spoke. A stout lady, with heavily-armoured hair, duly appeared at the door in answer to the summons.

"My dear, just see that all the doors are kept tightly closed for awhile," said Adams. "And if you notice a crowd gathering in the street outside, let me know at once."

"What's up?" asked the large lady suspiciously.

"Nothing at all, love," Adams assured her. "Only a delicate piece of business between this gentleman and myself. If you hear a horrible row presently, don't be alarmed. We're about to make some unique phonographic records, that's all. You might also send in the dog's chain, and dispatch one of the boys to the shop at once for a cheap American clock—the cheaper the better."

Mrs. Adams retired so slowly that she appeared to vanish in sections. Abraham waited patiently until the latch of the door had clicked, then he pushed the table which held the phonograph towards his client, and rapidly adjusted a blank record.

"It's the most remarkable notion I ever 'eard of," said Snooks solemnly. "Seems almost like playin' with the powers o' darkness!"

"Playing with fiddlesticks!" snapped Adams, winding up the mechanism as he spoke. "You'll be afraid of your own voice next! Now, when you're quite ready, I want you to put your head as far as possible into this brass trumpet and howl like a lost soul."

Snooks drew back and shook his head doubtfully.

"I never was no good at imitatin' things," he said, "not even when I've heard the originals. I haven't the ghost of an idea 'ow to mimic the 'owls of a tortured spirit, never 'aving 'eard such a thing. Seems to me that a cat on the tiles is about as near as one can get—meanin' no disrespeck to them that has bin through it."

"A very good idea," said Adams pleasantly, with his finger on the controlling lever. "Go ahead."

Mr. Snooks giggled bashfully.

"Seem rather silly for a respectable 'ouseholder, and the father of a grown-up family, don't it?" he remarked interrogatively.

"Not at all," answered Adams, heroically suppressing a very natural desire to laugh. "You must just let yourself go for once, Mr. Snooks, and put your whole soul into it."

Snooks placed his head in the trumpet and mewed hysterically. Adams stopped the performance with an impatient stamp of the foot.

"Did you ever hear a hungry spirit mewing aloud for a saucer of milk?" he asked scornfully.

"It's the best I can do!" snapped Snooks, withdrawing his head and mopping the cold perspiration from his forehead. "I know it don't sound very 'orrible, but I can't work up a decent 'owl to save me life."

Adams started the phonograph, and, stepping quickly forward, hid his face in the capacious mouth of the horn, howling fiendishly. He was gasping apoplectically when the rehearsal was finished. Snooks sat in the arm-chair, pale and trembling, his eyes opened to their fullest extent.

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"That'll kill Ogle, first go off!" he announced solemnly. "'Tain't 'uman! Sounded like 'Ades let loose!"

"I thought it was a pretty realistic effort," said Adams complacently. "The record will probably be a valuable one; we'll just run it through the phonograph, and hear how it sounds."

II.

Within a week of the interesting interview already recorded, Mr. Adams received a highly satisfactory telegram from his latest client. It read:

Have made it up with Ogle. He has invited me down to Upsea on Thursday. Mrs. Ogle and family will not arrive till Saturday following. Have his permission to go down to-day and measure empty rooms, pretending that I intend to have similar house built for myself. Meet me at Cannon Street Station at 5.45 this evening, with all appliances.

"Did you ever hear a hungry spirit mewing aloud for a saucer of milk?"

Abraham smiled pleasantly when he had read the message through.

"Snooks is not quite such a fool as his appearance would lead one to believe," he commented aloud. "We must go down to Upsea to-night and fix things up. The reception in three days' time, with Mrs. Ogle out of the way, should prove a big success."

Mr. Adams then proceeded to pack a large handbag, transferring the various articles from a drawer labelled "private and confidential," and handling them with the greatest possible care.

In two hours' time he had joined Snooks at Cannon Street Station. The smaller conspirator was very pale, and decidedly nervous.

"Got everything?" he inquired in a hoarse whisper, regarding the bag which Adams carried with a fascinated stare.

Abraham winked reassuringly, and led the way to an empty first-class compartment.

"Don't stare at the bag as if it had a live bomb inside, or we shall have a detective on our track," he remarked warningly. "Try to look easy and natural."

Snooks sat back among the cushions, and whistled in a tuneless way until the train started. Adams handed him a wicker-covered flask, from which he drank deeply.

"We'll have a rehearsal at the house," said Abraham, as the other sat back gasping, with his eyes still fixed on the bag in the rack. "It would be too dangerous to go through the programme now; we'd have the old lady in the next compartment pulling the emergency cord."

"Do they sound very 'orrible then?" asked Snooks, shivering involuntarily.

"Fiendish!" replied Adams with a grin. "I spoilt no fewer than ten cylinders before I secured a satisfactory blood-curdler in the way of shrieks, and the clanking of chains was very difficult to obtain. I had to shake

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'em about in a zinc pail and groan dismally at the same time."

"I managed my part of the business all right with Ogle, didn't I?" said Snooks, changing the conversation abruptly. "But although we're the best o' friends, he seems to be a bit upset at the thought of my still wantin' the 'ouse. Ogle's a tender-'earted chap at bottom, an' we've always bin on most affectionate terms afore this 'appened."

"I'm glad to hear that Ogle is tender-hearted," said Adams brutally. "He'll be more easily scared."

It was nearly seven o'clock when the conspirators reached the "double fronted" villa at Upsea, and the half-furnished house appeared gloomy enough in the quickly waning light. Snooks led the way up an uncarpeted staircase, and entered a small room on the first floor.

"This is Ogle's smoking-room," he announced breathlessly. "It's the only apartment properly furnished as yet, so we're sure to spend the evenin' in 'ere on Thursday. The walls are very thin—lath an' plaster," he added, tapping the party partition as he spoke, "and the adjoinin' room is empty."

"Is there any place in the empty room in which we can fix up the phonograph?" asked Adams.

"Just the thing," answered Snooks. "There's a little closet for airing linen, close to the ceiling; come in and see."

Adams lit a candle, and the pair passed through the doorway into the adjoining room.

"That seems to be all right," said Adams, gazing critically at the tiny cupboard. "Well out of reach, and not likely to be inspected just yet. When I've got everything ready, I shall lock the closet door and take away the key to prevent accidents."

"And we'll leave the window unfastened," added Snooks, "so that you can get in quietly on Thursday night while Ogle is entertainin' me in the next room. You'll find a ladder in the garden, just below."

Adams stood on a chair borrowed from the smoking-room, and rapidly made all the necessary arrangements. The phonograph was placed in position, and the "death watch," in the shape of a small American clock, duly wound up, and adjusted close to the party wall. Snooks crept out on the tips of his toes, and a tap on the wall informed the other conspirator that he was waiting in the smoking-room for the rehearsal to begin. In another moment the house was full of a medley of shrieks and groans, and Snooks dashed back into the empty room, trembling in every limb.

"It's simply 'orrible!" he gasped. "I can't stand it in there alone! For the Lord's sake turn it off, and let's get out of this!"

Adams stopped the phonograph, but the "death watch" still ticked ominously.

"If you can manage to look as scared on Thursday as you do now, the plot will work admirably," he remarked with a benevolent smile. "And now we'll have a good stiff glass of brandy at The Bell before we return to town."

III.

It was quite dark and raining hard when Mr. Paddington Snooks made his way to the marine residence of George Ogle, Esq., of Upsea. He had parted with Adams at the railway station, and it was arranged that that worthy should follow in ten minutes' time, and stealthily enter the house by the way and means already indicated. Snooks noted with satisfaction as he approached the house that the gas was alight in the smoking room, and that there were no other lights on the premises. The garden gate clanged so noisily after Snooks had passed through that there was no necessity for him to knock at the door. Ogle was already standing on the doorstep to receive his visitor.

"Come in, Pad, my boy, pleased to see you I'm sure—very pleased," he said cheerily. "Take off your wet coat, an' make yourself at 'ome. What do you think of the seaside in dirty weather? Enough to blow your 'ead off, isn't it?"

"It *is* bleak," acknowledged Snooks, groping about in the dark hall. "Wet, too! Rainin' 'eavens 'ard! Where shall I 'ang my 'at?"

Ogle struck a match.

"'Ang your things on the bannisters, an' come upstairs," he said kindly. "Lord, man! how white you look! 'Ave you seen a ghost, or what? You're all of a shake!"

"I've bin 'urrying," explained Snooks weakly, as he followed his host into the tiny "den" on the first floor. "'Aste always upsets me 'eart. I suppose you don't 'ave no trouble with *your* 'eart?"

"Sound as a bell, thank the Lord!" said Ogle piously. "If it 'adn't bin, I think I should have died last night. But sit down an' 'ave a drop of something 'ot."

"What 'appened last night?" demanded Snooks.

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"Oh! only what to anybody else but me might have been a pretty bad scare."

"Burglars?"

"Worse than burglars, if you must know. The fact is Pad, old chap, that you're well out of this place—it's 'aunted!"

Mr. Snooks rose from his seat and gazed at his host with round eyes and open mouth. Slowly it dawned upon him that an unkindly Fate had already anticipated the costly and elaborate scheme which he and Adams had planned. He felt as a playwright would feel whose best efforts had been neutralised by an unexpected parallel in fact.

"'Aunted?" he gasped faintly. "Wot's it 'aunted by?"

"Nothing that can frighten *me*," said Ogle reassuringly. "But if my 'eart was as weak as yours is I should have bin a corpse by now," he added with tragic effect.

"Wot form do it take?" gasped Snooks, dropping limply into his chair, and raising the spirit to his lips with a palsied hand.

"Sometimes it's a skeleton with a coffin on its back; sometimes it's an uncoloured bogie with its throat cut; and sometimes it's a cheerful little red devil which jumps around like a grass'opper!" announced Ogle impressively.

Snooks wiped the cold perspiration off his forehead, and glanced timidly over his shoulder.

"Is it really so bad as that?" he gasped.

"Worse!" said Ogle emphatically.

"An' Mrs. Ogle. What effect will it 'ave on' er?"

"Well, of course, she'll be 'orrified at first—same as she was years ago at the sight of a mouse. But when our place got overrun with mice, she sorter got used to 'em. In the same way she'll have to get accustomed to seeing a few miscellaneous skeletons an' apparitions walkin' about the premises after nightfall. They won't 'urt 'er no more than the mice did."

Snooks refilled his glass without invitation, glancing furtively into the shadowland beyond the open doorway as he did so.

"I think I'll be trottin' soon, if you don't mind, George," he announced, consulting a watch which had been stopped for three weeks. "There's a train back in ten minutes time, and I told Mrs. Snooks that I wouldn't be late home. It's such a long way down 'ere!"

"Goin' already!" exclaimed Ogle. "Why you've only just come! You mustn't think of leavin' me for an hour or more yet. I want to show you round."

Snooks rose to his feet and yawned artificially.

"I'm dog tired," he said, with a spasmodic stretch of the arms. "One night next week I'll come down an' spend a few hours with you, if you'll 'ave me. Where did I leave my 'at?"

"But you 'aven't seen anything yet," protested Ogle.

"I've seen all there is to see, and what I haven't seen I'll see next time," said Snooks desperately.

A heavy thud in the next room indicated that Adams had made a clumsy entrance through the window. At the same moment the gas in the smoking-room flickered down to a tiny jet.

"That's how it always begins," said Ogle pointing to the rapidly diminishing light.

"Slot meter I suppose?" hazarded Snooks shakily. "Wants another penny put in."

"Nothing of the kind!" exclaimed the other impatiently. "It's the beginning of the physical phenomena I told you about."

A loud, buzzing noise somewhat difficult to locate followed closely upon Ogle's words.

Snooks tried to speak, but his tongue appeared to be glued to the roof of his mouth. He placed a trembling hand on his skull and pressed down a scanty tuft of rising hair.

"What's that whirring sound?" he murmured at length.

"That's the devil's hurricane!" announced Ogle cheerfully. "It'll be followed by what the scientists call 'appearances.' Keep your eye on the wall over there by the fireplace, an' you'll see something indescribably shockin'!"

Snooks turned a horrified eye in the direction indicated, and beheld a skeleton bearing a spare head in either hand pass slowly through the wall, which appeared to close up behind it. Then the grisly thing began to dance madly and silently in the air, a foot or so from the ground, at the same time juggling cleverly with the extra skulls.

Snooks dropped suddenly into a chair, and, hiding his face in his hands, prayed aloud. He was sitting so as to face the wall which divided the smoking-room from that occupied by Adams. The ticking of the "death watch" was distinctly audible, and the chains had already commenced clanking in an eminently businesslike way.

"Ghostly tickings and the fetters of departed spirits," announced Ogle in a thick whisper. "I 'ear them every night."

"It's a lie!" shouted Snooks fiercely.

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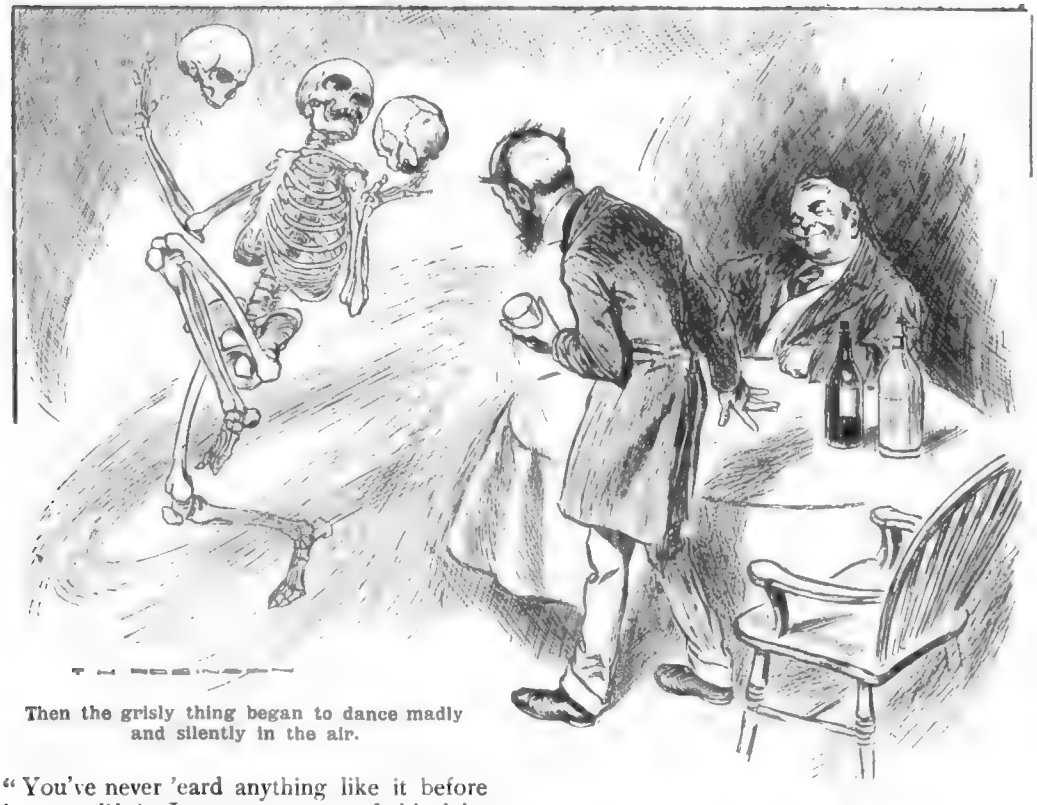

Then the grisly thing began to dance madly and silently in the air.

"You've never 'eard anything like it before in your life! Let me get out of this 'ole, or I'll put my foot through the windows, an' call the police till the whole village is aroused!"

"You'll 'ear orful shrieks like a man would utter who was dying slowly in a cauldron of boiling pitch," said Ogle, ignoring the threat of his friend. "Then the little red fiend with green eyes and pig's feet will appear and begin to swallow serpents."

Snooks raised his head and glanced nervously between his finger and thumb. The "little red fiend" was already beginning his ghastly meal. At the same moment a series of terrible wails and groans filled the house. Snooks snatched his glass from the table and hurled it at the grinning spectre with all his strength. It struck the wall with a crash and burst into a hundred fragments. The highly-coloured imp continued to devour snakes without a moment's interruption.

"No use being vi'lent, Pad," remonstrated Ogle. "You can't 'urt 'im, an' 'e will 'ave 'is time."

Snooks rose to his feet, swaying unsteadily, and, lifting his arm as though to ward off an impending blow, flung himself suddenly through the open doorway. At the top of the dark staircase he collided violently with some object which was groping its way stealthily in the same direction.

"Is it you, Snooks?" asked the new terror in a sepulchral voice. "If it is, for goodness sake show me the way out!"

"Down the stairs—quick!" gasped Snooks. "I 'ear footsteps behind! It's following us!"

"The corpse?" asked Adams, pawing the air wildly for the guiding touch of the balustrade.

"No—the red fiend!" cried the other deliriously.

And the street door closed with a resounding bang, just as Ogle, who was smiling gleefully, emerged from the smoking-room.

* * * * *

In the bar of the Bell Inn the confederates sat facing each other, with a rapidly diminishing bottle of brandy on the table between them.

"There was a corpse lying in the empty room," explained Adams hoarsely. "I was working in the dark, so I didn't notice it at

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first. It was only when the thing rose in and upset its own coffin that I——"

"Don't!" interrupted Snooks hysterically. "Don't tell me anything else!

"Seems to me that there's some trickery in it," said Adams, "and your friend Ogle is laughing at us at the present moment."

"Shouldn't wonder!" remarked Snooks thoughtfully. "Mebbe 'e found the phonograph all ready for use in the airing closet, an' tried the records beforehand. P'raps, too, it was only a man dressed up as a corpse that you saw. Anyway, whether it was an 'oax, or whether it was a genuine little 'Ades, I wouldn't go within fifty yards of the place again for a thousand pounds."

And while this interesting conversation was taking place in the Bell Inn, George Ogle and his two confederates were making the house at Upsea ring with laughter.

"Good idea of mine, that 'ole in the wall and a cinematograph in the other empty room wasn't it?" asked Ogle for the twentieth time. "It showed up well on the white wall paper."

"You went one better than their phonograph, anyway," remarked the "corpse" with a very materialistic chuckle. "When did you discover the thing in the cupboard?"

"On the day after Snooks had been down 'ere to measure the rooms," answered Ogle. "The door of the closet was locked, but I forced it open with a screw-driver. The phonograph was already wound up and a record adjusted. I started the machine right away, out of curiosity, and the awful noise it made scared me nearly to death. I was certain that Snooks was at the bottom of the affair, because nobody 'ad been near the place but 'im and me. So I made arrangements to fight 'im with 'is own weapons, not forgettin' to prepare a pleasant little surprise for his partner also."

"Time I was going home," said the biograph man, packing his bag. "How goes it?"

"Exactly 'alf-past nine by the 'death watch'—eternity time," said Ogle, glancing at an American clock on the mantelpiece. "I'll have that timepiece put away with my other presents from Paddington Snooks—two cast-iron chains an' a brand-new phonograph."

AN IRREPARABLE LOSS

"Oh! stay," he pleaded, "stay with me;
Why should you wish to go?
The thought of your departure fills
My inmost heart with woe.

"E'er since the day when first we met
I've known no care or pain;
Each day you filled my heart with joy—
Have pity and remain.

"Though other hearts may call you hence,
And other spots be fair,
Yet you can surely find with me
All that awaits you there.

"Ask what you will, whate'er it be,
I will not say you nay;
Take all I have, I'll be content
If only you will stay."

Alas! his pleading was in vain,
The maiden shook her head.
"What you desire can never be,
I cannot stay," she said.

He cried aloud in his despair:
"This loss will drive me mad!
What shall I do without my cook?—
The best man ever had!"

Herbert J. Brandon.

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MR. —HIS PAGES

A reader sends "Mr. X" the following "Sub-title" for his pages, each word begins with a letter of the alphabet, in order. Who can better it on the same lines? There is a Puzzle Penknife waiting for him—or her. ***All Brilliant Oatches Desired—Every Funny Genius Honoured. I Jest Knowing Laughter Makes Nations Oftentimes Prosperous—Quaintly, Really, Strengthening The Universe. Venerate Witty 'X.'—Yours Zealously, "Mr. X."***

Puzzle Penknives, Puzzle Purses, or Royal Packs of Playing Cards will be given as prizes to readers who forward *new* puzzles, problems, or other tricks which are inserted in this feature. Any readers communicating with "Mr. X" and wishing for a reply, should inclose a stamped, addressed envelope. All letters should be addressed to "Mr. X" (care of The Royal Magazine, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

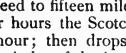
A Railway Riddle.

Two trains, the Dutchman and the Scotchman, leave the same station at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. respectively.

For four hours the Dutchman travels at the rate of twenty miles per hour; then reduces speed to fifteen miles an hour.

For four hours the Scotchman does thirty miles an hour; then drops to twenty miles for the remainder of the journey.

How many miles will the Dutchman travel before being overtaken by the Scotchman? What will be the time?



Undeniable.

To prove that a dead dog is alive.

If a dog is half dead he is certainly half alive.

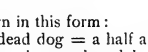
Set it down in this form:

A half dead dog = a half alive dog.

An equation is not altered by multiplying both sides by the same figure, is it? Well, let us multiply both sides of the above by two. We then get:

A wholly dead dog = a wholly alive dog.

∴ a dead dog is alive.



A Tale that is Told.

Smith: "Have you heard the story of the bell?"

Green: "No."

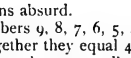
Smith: "Surprised at that, because it's been often tolled!"

Be Careful.

James: "A certain beggar had a brother; the brother died. What relation was the beggar to the brother?"

Charles: "Oh, the abysmal age of that! The beggar was a woman, and so was sister to the brother."

James: "One of these days your sharpness will get you into trouble. This beggar was a man, and so was brother to his brother."



Things that are Equal to the Same Thing.

Can you subtract 45 from 45 so as to leave 45?

Absurd!

By no means absurd.

If the numbers 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 are added together they equal 45.

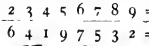
Well, let them be our top line.

It is obvious that the sum of the figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 are also equal to 45.

Let them be our bottom line.

Now then:

$$\begin{array}{r} 9\ 8\ 7\ 6\ 5\ 4\ 3\ 2\ 1 = 45 \\ 1\ 2\ 3\ 4\ 5\ 6\ 7\ 8\ 9 = 45 \\ \hline 8\ 6\ 4\ 1\ 9\ 7\ 5\ 3\ 2 = \mathbf{45} \end{array}$$



An Enigma.

Q. What is that which flies high, lies low, wears shoes, but has no feet?

A. Dust.

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Simple Arithmetic.

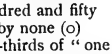
Can you construct the name of a place in South Africa from the following formula? "Mr. X" does not claim originality for the puzzle, but those of his readers who have heard it may still find its solution difficult to remember.

Here is the formula:

One hundred and fifty divided by none;
Add two-thirds of one,
And so ends the sum.

And here the solution:

One hundred and fifty = CL
Divided by none (o) = COL
Add two-thirds of "one" —*i.e.*, any two letters = COLEN
And "so" ends the sum = COLENSO.



Credit where it is Due.

BROWN: "Do you ride a bicycle?"

JONES: "Yes."

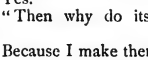
BROWN: "Then why do its wheels go round?"

JONES: "Because I make them."

BROWN: "You're wrong; it was the manufacturer who made them."

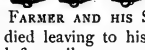
JONES: "Made them what?"

BROWN: "Round, of course; or circular, if you like it better."



The Farmer and his Sons.

A farmer died leaving to his five sons a piece of land five miles square. Each son was to have one-fifth of the outside fence and one-fifth of the land. To stake out the lots according to these conditions is giving them some trouble. Can you help?



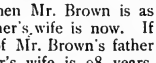
An Astonishing Country.

From one of his good friends in New Zealand "Mr. X" has received a letter so full of wonders that he must give his other readers the benefit of part of it.

"Our pheasants out here are very curious. We often see one flying and a cat sitting on its tail—on its own tail by the doorstep, of course. And then our mosquitoes! They are a terrible nuisance to us at night, as (if you will believe me) they actually sit on the trees and bark! On the bark of the trees, I mean, of course. And they are very large, too. Many of them weigh over a pound—of course it requires a *good* many to reach that weight."

A Brown Study.

Mr. Brown's father will be half as old again as Mr. Brown when Mr. Brown is as old as Mr. Brown's father's wife is now. If the sum of the ages of Mr. Brown's father and Mr. Brown's father's wife is 98 years, and Mr. Brown is 26 years old, how old is Mr. Brown's father's wife?



A Kind of Jiu-Jitsu.

Bet a friend that you will successfully pit the strength of one of your fingers against that of his whole body.

Tell him it is to be a shoving match—his whole weight against your finger. He must agree to let you put your finger where you please, and he must not use his hands.

Stand right in his path, and as he advances stretch out one arm and point the index finger. *Keep both arm and finger rigid.* As he comes within reach, place the index finger at the bottom of his nose, *i.e.*, just in the hollow of the lip. If you keep your arm and finger rigid, and stand firm yourself, no matter how strong or heavy your friend is, he cannot go any further.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

B. E. (Chard, Somerset).—You send "Mr. X" a riddle, part of the answer to which is "and because your face makes me sick." "Mr. X" is sorry. His face worries him himself sometimes, but he has to push along through life with it.

Y. G. T. (Welbeck Street).—"Mr. X" will try to find room for "Too Stale by Half," but he considers it too stale by nearly the same amount for him to give a prize for it.

J. H. H. (Mutley, Plymouth).—Thank you very much. But jokes found in an old chest of your grandfather's are not likely to possess that crisp freshness which wins a puzzle-penknife. Indeed, the second of your two jokes must, "Mr. X" thinks, have been found by your grandfather in a chest belonging to his grandfather.

C. S. (Eastbourne).—When "Mr. X" dies the catch about "If the B m t put:" will be found written on his heart.

Miss G. (Liscard, Cheshire).—Though a singularly bright boy when at school, "Mr. X" was so severely thrashed for his dullness over the "herring and a half cost three-ha'pence" sum that to this day he avoids it.

N. A. M. (Mumbles, Glamorgan).—If you are sent a heavy doctor's bill you must not be surprised and you must pay. "Mr. X's" aunt read your suggestion that a cattle ranch in Australia owned by the two sons of an English gentleman should be called "Focus," because it is where the sun's rays meet (sons raise meat), and she has been prostrated ever since.

S. S. C. (Maid-tone).—Your riddle is not precisely new. It is not known who first made the joke about a horse having ten legs because its two fore legs made eight—some say it was William Rufus, another school of research attributes it to Alfred the Great—anyway, it is growing old now.

R. W. H. (Woodhall Spa).—See answer to "C. S." If there is room on "Mr. X's" heart, the catch about "that man's father is my father's son," will certainly be found inscribed thereon.

G. E. M. (Churston-Ferrers).—If you are with an undersized, sickly man, by all means tell him that you will bite six inches off the poker—an irascible, muscular man, on the contrary, would probably brain you at once. The joke was very popular with the Ancient Britons, but it has grown old since then.

SOLUTIONS.

A RAILWAY RIDDLE: 160 miles; 8.20 p.m.
A BROWN STUDY: Forty-eight.

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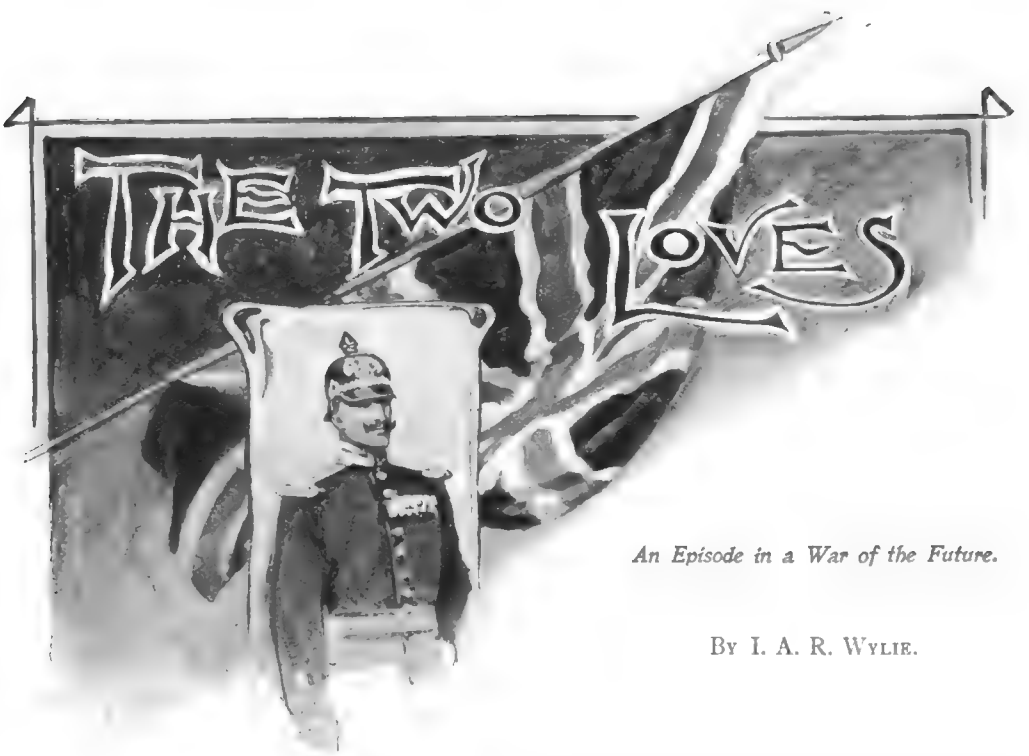

An Episode in a War of the Future.

By I. A. R. Wylie.

I.

She had met him in Berlin, and they had fallen in love with each other with the vehemence and sincerity which are youth's attributes. The course of their passionate attachment had run with only fair smoothness, but the end of it all was that she married him amidst the headshakings of her relatives, and secretly troubled by inward doubts and self-questionings. It was not that she distrusted the depth of her affection for him or of his for her, she knew both to be true and lasting; but there were other things.

There was, for instance, the question of nationality. A German officer and an Englishwoman—what was likely to come of such a union? In the first ardour of their love this difference was only an additional charm, but what of later, in the humdrum of married life—might there not spring up a barrier between them, a barrier of taste, of custom, of national feeling? She asked herself these questions almost on the steps of the altar, and then forgot them in a dream of happiness.

Afterwards, when these doubts returned, she either put them on one side or answered boldly: "My husband's country is my country; I must learn to accept it as my own." But she distrusted herself. All she could be sure of was that there should be no little daily discords through lack of tact or gentleness, and here she succeeded admirably. The first six months of their married life were cloudless; she accepted his way in everything, and there was no nationality in their love. They lived in a peaceful world of their own where politics and feuds had no place.

Then came the catastrophe.

It was one fine morning at the end of June. She had seated herself by the breakfast table and was glancing through some letters when her husband entered. She looked up eagerly as though to greet him and then stopped, struck by the expression on his face. He was flushed, and his eyes shone. She could tell that something had happened.

"Gerhardt, what is it?" she asked with a shade of uneasiness.

He came over and kissed her.

"There, little woman," he said, "don't worry; it's nothing—or at least it's a great deal—but it's good news, not bad."

"Don't keep me on tenterhooks," she retorted with mock severity. "Have you been made captain or has the Emperor decided his staff cannot exist any longer without you, or——"

"It's war!" he interrupted her, bringing his hand down upon the table with sudden passionate emphasis. "It's war at last—the

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news has just come. The 'Sixteenth' has marching orders."

He began pacing excitedly up and down the room, and did not notice that she had grown deathly white.

"War!" she stammered. "With whom—I don't understand——"

"To think it should be my luck to help drive the braggarts back to their homes!" he went on half to himself. "Heaven grant they may come this way, we'll give them more than they bargained for. Let's see what a little German steel will do for their boasting. I tell you, England has signed her death-warrant!"

He was incoherent in his triumphant delight. As for Margaret, she sat motionless. She knew what he meant—rumours had reached her, but she had purposely avoided them, knowing they spelt danger for them both. And now it had come—this horror.

"Within a year the cowards will be trying to piece the fragments!" He laughed between his teeth and she forgave him, knowing he saw in her nothing but his wife, someone who rejoiced when he rejoiced and hated where he hated—an integral part of himself. But she was horrified because a haughty, contemptuous retort had nearly parted her lips. She choked it back and sat silent.

"There are a hundred things to be thought of," he continued more quietly. "For one thing, you cannot stay here. We are right on the coast, and if they get a landing this will be one of the first places to be attacked. All the ladies of the regiment are to go south to-morrow. You must go too——"

"No," she said steadily, "I stay here."

"You cannot," he answered, looking at her. "The town will be in preparation for a siege. All non-combatants must leave."

"I have had a nurse's training," she said. "I shall offer myself as such."

"And if I were killed——" he began.

She caught hold of him with a sudden burst of anguish.

"Don't," she cried—"don't, Gerhardt!" Everything for the moment was swallowed up in the fear for the man she loved; she loathed herself because that had not been her first thought. He comforted her with all the tenderness at his command.

"We won't talk of that," he said gently. "After all, the chances are we shall all come out safe and sound. They say the beggars can't hit a haystack at a hundred yards!" He laughed a little, and tried to kiss her, but she struggled out of his arms.

"Please——" she said irritably. Then a wave of compunction rushed over her at the sight of his hurt face. "Forgive me, dear," she said. "I'm nervous and disturbed—you must have patience."

He nodded indulgently.

"I must be off," he said. "There's a great deal to be done. Should we be attacked, this house will be used for some of the wounded. If you are really going to stay——"

"I will see to everything," she said. He put his arm over her shoulder, and this time she made no resistance against his caress.

"Good-bye, little woman!" he said, smiling down at her. "Don't look so grave. It isn't as bad as all that."

She made no answer, but went to the window and watched him as he swung briskly along the narrow street. It was as if some terrible eruption had burst forth and shaken the very foundations of her happiness. Until now she and her husband had neither differed in thought nor feeling—they had been "one" in a sense which few married lives can lay claim to. Now came the parting of the ways, the moment when she could no longer stifle the old instincts nor tear herself free from the old ties. And just then Margaret suffered the tortures of a woman whose soul is torn between two master passions.

II.

The days passed, and with their passing the shadow of war grew heavier and darker over the land. The little garrison town was deserted except for the passing regiments on the way to the coast. The tramp of the marching feet grew an awful, monotonous song in Margaret's ears. She kept to the back of the house so that she need not hear it or see the uniforms she was growing to hate. She did not admit that she hated them—she dared not, but it lay in the recesses of her soul like a dark, unrecognised secret which must one day come to light.

Gerhardt's regiment had been ordered a little north of the town on to an elevation which overlooked the coast; he was, therefore, able here and there to ride quickly over and see his wife. She received him with a passion and eagerness which came even to him as a surprise. He did not know that she was goaded by a sense of disloyalty and betrayal. He saw only her love and was satisfied. Yet she never spoke of the war nor inquired after its progress. It was as if it did not exist for her, and, absorbed as he

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was in his profession, her obstinate silence irritated him somewhat.

"You strange little thing!" he said on one of his flying visits. "You never ask me questions; you don't seem to care. It might only be the manœuvres for all the interest you show."

She turned a little and began to busy herself with a packet she was preparing for him.

"I think only of you—and your safety," she said unsteadily.

"A soldier's wife should not have such thoughts," he returned. "She should only pray he may do great deeds against the enemy. That is all that matters."

She made no answer, but the red blood rushed to her cheek. Against the enemy—she was to pray he might do great deeds against her people, her countrymen! Yes, doubtless, there lay duty. She recognised it and loathed it. After that things grew to such a pass with her that she dreaded her husband's coming, she dreaded the sight of his uniform, she dreaded the sound of his voice, which spoke with such calm certainty of her country's overthrow. As for him, he noticed nothing except that she seemed anxious and uneasy—a natural state for a woman whose husband is about to enter the battlefield.

One day he came back with a sterner line round his usually smiling mouth.

"There has been a big naval battle," he said abruptly, and stood with his back to her, gazing out of the window. She took a deep breath.

"Yes—and——?" she asked, her voice scarcely above a whisper.

"Bah! It was ten to one. The only thing happened that could be expected. We were driven off."

A flush sprang to Margaret's cheek, a flush of uncontrollable triumph. Then she felt measureless remorse that it was so.

"The beggars have effected a landing," he went on between his teeth; "they must have a few clever heads amongst them, for it was an almost impossible feat. There will be a fight in a few hours' time, we are waiting for them to come up. The general sent me with some orders back to the town, otherwise I could never have come to say—good-bye."

She got up and put her arms round him and they kissed solemnly, knowing that it might well be for the last time. They had no need for words, each knew what the other suffered, and each tried to conceal that suffering for the other's sake. Then Gerhardt turned and left her.

All that afternoon she sat by the window and waited. It seemed to her an eternity, the seconds of which were counted by the beatings of her heart. Outside in the streets reigned a deathlike silence, except here and there when a military doctor tramped past on his way to the improvised hospital. Only in case of emergency was her house to be used, so that no one troubled about the pale-faced woman who sat hour after hour at the window and watched and waited.

Then at four o'clock a heavy boom broke the stillness. Margaret started violently, and caught at the ledge. She was not afraid, she had brave blood in her veins, but a terrible anxiety seized her. Was that an English gun—had it been well aimed—had the shot gone home, and was perhaps Gerhardt amidst that heap of dead and dying which her imagination conjured up before her in a sea of blood?

Then her thoughts took a violent turn. What if after all that boom had been the explosion of a German cannon! Her husband had always boasted of their artillery's accuracy. She could fancy how the shot had gone tearing its way among the ranks of the khaki coats she loved, leaving in its track mangled and lifeless bodies. Perhaps a sudden terror had seized the attacking forces—perhaps they were wavering.

Then she laughed out loud.

Englishmen did not waver.

After that she could not count the boomings of the cannon. They followed each other in rapid succession till it sounded like one continuous roar of thunder which shook the little town to its very foundations. As the afternoon sun sank and the dusk began to creep along the streets a frozen misery settled upon Margaret's heart. She felt that somehow each of those terrible crashes was shattering the fair walls of her life's happiness. For herself she cared nothing, but out yonder two nations were tearing at each other's throats, and on the one side was her husband and on the other her blood and people. Death was better than what she then suffered.

She began to wonder vaguely what the officers' wives were doing who had been sent south. She could fancy the quiet, devoted German women kneeling by their bedsides and praying that their men might be kept from harm and their armies led to victory. She, too, was an officer's wife, she, too, was a German woman, and she had not prayed—no, neither for him nor for his country.

She got up and clasped her hand like a child. Her fair face, turned to the last rays

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of the setting sun, was almost old in its drawn pain. "God keep him safe," she prayed aloud, and then: "God send his people victorious."

She stood thus for a moment, swaying on her feet, then a strangled cry broke from her, and she sank down again, her head buried in her arms. Through the blinding tears she saw green pasture, an old-world rose garden, and in the midst of it the worshipped home of her childhood. She saw, too, her brothers with whom she had romped and played. Some had gone into the Army, some into the Navy, some had wandered out into the Colonies, but each served his country, each was a loyal Englishman. But she had prayed defeat and humiliation might visit the land she loved; she was a traitor, and she alone.

Suddenly, through her misery, came the realisation that the streets were no longer empty and silent. Carts jolted past laden with wounded; ragged and bloodstained soldiers stumbled on their way to the hospital. It was a ghastly and revolting sight, and as each cart rolled on its way. Margaret peered with straining eyes down through the gathering gloom. But Gerhardt was not amongst them—not yet. She did not go down to ask how the battle fared. She could not—dared not. Presently she heard the sound of horses' hoofs coming slowly along the cobbled streets. They stopped, and in a minute Margaret had flung the window open. An officer on horseback stood beneath.

"Help me off, dear," he said. "I'm wounded."

"Gerhardt!" she called breathlessly.

"Come down!" was the brief answer.

She ran swiftly down the stairs and opened the door. He had still not dismounted.

"Help me off, dear," he said. "I'm wounded—only a little—don't be alarmed; but I've lost a good deal of blood and am rather faint."

He put his hand on her shoulder and half-sprang, half-fell to the ground. She helped him to his room and laid him comfortably upon the couch she had prepared. He had been shot through the shoulder, and though the wound was not dangerous it placed him *hors de combat* for some time. A great sense of thankfulness came over her; he was safe now, safe in her hands. She was a good nurse and bandaged his wound skilfully, but it was only after the doctor had been and pronounced all well that she dared to think of other things. In spite of all that had been done for him, Gerhardt was restless and impatient.

"To think," he exclaimed, "that this infernal scratch should keep me out of the very best of it! What luck some fellows have!"

The cool hand upon his forehead shook.

"Then—then all has gone well—I mean, they have been defeated?" she said slowly. He laughed.

"Defeated? That's too fine a word for such child's play. They came on like half-hearted sheep. I believe their officers had to flog them to move at all——"

"That's not true!" she burst out suddenly, and then closed her lips tight together. He looked up in surprise.

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"Oh!" he said, a light dawning on him. "I forgot. Of course, you were English yourself once. I'm sorry, dear. I didn't mean to hurt you."

She turned away. English once? What folly! She was English now and for ever, in blood, and thought, and feeling. A hot rage seized her that anyone should dare to think she could be anything else.

"Anyhow, to-morrow they will be driven into the sea," Gerhardt went on more to himself than to her. She heard him and shuddered. In some unaccountable way she felt that it was SHE who had brought disaster upon her country, that God had received her prayer and answered it. As night wore on the booming of the guns died away into silence, and presently Gerhardt fell into an uneasy sleep.

Margaret seated herself again by the half-opened window. It was a beautiful night, and the newly-risen moon bathed the narrow street in silver, and cast up in the corners black and sinister shadows. The last waggon-load of wounded had rolled on its way, and all was quiet.

Then all at once a footfall fell on Margaret's ear.

She leant a little further out and saw on the opposite side the figure of a man coming slowly along. As she first caught sight of him he was in the shadow of a wall, but a moment afterwards he was forced to step into the moonlight and Margaret recognised the uniform of a Prussian soldier. She must have made some sound, for he looked up, hesitated, and then came across the road. He stumbled once or twice, and Margaret thought he must be badly wounded. At the door he again paused, and then came a subdued knock. Margaret looked at her husband. He still slept. She went quickly downstairs and opened the door.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"A corporal in the 17th Foot," was the gruff reply. "I'm badly hit and the hospital is full. Can you take me in?"

Margaret moved a little on one side.

"Come," she said, "I will do what I can for you."

She led the way up into one of the top rooms, where preparations had been made for the wounded, and hardly gave a thought to the man who stumbled on behind her. Everything was forgotten in the memory of her husband's words: "To-morrow they will be driven into the sea!" Thus it came as a shock to her when she heard the door of the room they entered sharply shut after them and the key turned. Margaret started round, and found herself face to face with the Prussian soldier. He had removed his battered helmet and was leaning against the door, smiling at her.

"Geoffrey!" she gasped, and gazed at him as though he had risen from the dead.

"Yes," he said calmly, "I recognised you in the doorway. It was the most extraordinary piece of luck I ever fell over."

"What in Heaven's name are you doing here?" she exclaimed. "You—an English officer in the very heart of the enemy—are you mad?"

He drew himself up with a sudden movement of resolution which contrasted strongly with his beardless face.

"My explanation must be short," he said, "but an explanation you must have, for you are to help me."

"I?" she repeated.

"Yes, you. The attack to-day was a mere feint to hide a flank movement which in the dark was undiscovered by the Germans. We have succeeded in placing our troops to the north and south of the town, and a simultaneous attack is to take place from both sides, but——"

"Well?" she asked.

"It was arranged that the moment our half of the troops reached the south walls a signal was to be given so that the northern party should know when to begin operations. On the way an accident happened, the signalling apparatus was smashed. A shot would betray our whereabouts, and besides might not be recognised as a signal. A light could not be seen. But from this house——"

"Yes?"

"It could be seen," he terminated.

There was a moment's absolute silence. Then he went on——

"I volunteered and promised that within half-an-hour a fire should be burning from the roof of one of these houses. There are ten minutes to spare. Come."

She drew back with a sharp cry.

"You cannot—you must not! This is my husband's house—you will make me a traitor—he will never forgive me——"

Her brother made a stern gesture.

"Margaret," he said gravely, "when I volunteered I knew that I had no hope ever to return alive. The moment I go back into the streets my disguise will be discovered and so I am dying in my true colours." He wrenched his tunic open, and Margaret saw underneath the uniform of an English officer. "I give my life and you your happiness," he

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said. "What is that? What are two lives in comparison with our country's honour? This night shall be the first great victory to our arms. That is enough for us."

Still she hesitated.

"A mile off our brave men are waiting," he said; "in a few minutes it may be too late. Shall it be said that England was defeated because an Englishwoman loved her own happiness dearer than her nation?"

Their eyes met in the light of the flickering candle, and it was as if a sudden wave rushed over Margaret's soul. She forgot Gerhardt, she forgot her marriage, her adoption of a new country—everything was swallowed up in the fire of a wild, boundless patriotism, all the stronger, all the more irresistible because it had been curbed and crushed and repudiated.

"There," she said, "up these steps is the roof. I will bring you wood. There is a little wind, in a minute there will be a fire that can be seen for miles around."

He nodded, and in a minute had disappeared in the direction she had indicated. Silently and rapidly they worked together. When there was no more wood they smashed the furniture and piled it on the growing heap. Every now and then they paused and listened anxiously. Margaret's hands were torn and bleeding, and the perspiration stood in great beads upon her forehead, but she made no sound. Only when Geoffrey laid a match to the pile she caught his arm.

"The house," she said. "It may be burnt to the ground!"

"So much the better," he answered.

"My husband——"

"You will have time to save him."

They stood side by side till the wood had well caught, then they went softly down the stairs. In the narrow passage he stooped and kissed her.

"You are a brave girl," he said. "Good-bye."

"Good-bye," she answered. She did not break down. The spirit of sacrifice had descended upon them both. Their end was achieved, and, even if death came, all was still well. He went out into the bright street and disappeared from her sight for ever.

Ten minutes later and a red flame shot up into the night sky. And a moment after that a burst of what seemed thunder shook the little, silent town. Gerhardt started up from his restless sleep.

"What is that?" he asked.

Margaret was still sitting by the window, and made no answer. The roar of cannon grew louder and heavier, intermingled with the sharp rattle of musketry.

"They are attacking!" exclaimed the wounded man. "The sounds are coming from all sides. My God, the devils must have surrounded us!"

He tried to struggle to his feet, but Margaret forced him gently back.

"You can do nothing," she said.

He lay down with a despairing groan and listened to the rush of men along the now crowded streets. A wild confusion seemed to have set in, and still the thunder grew nearer and nearer.

"What has happened—what has happened?" he asked perpetually.

As dawn began to break an awful sight revealed itself in the street below. Flying soldiers fought and struggled along in hopeless disorganisation, knowing not whither to escape from the pitiless fire which seemed to pour down upon them at every turn. Wounded men were crushed under foot or fell dying on the doorsteps of the houses. Here and there an officer tried to rally his men, but it was only for a moment, they could do nothing hemmed in as they were, and the brave little bands were swept along with their flying comrades.

Margaret crouched by her husband's side, sick at heart. She knew that, were it needed, she would do again what she had done, but the cost was terrible—more terrible than she had ever thought.

Suddenly a heavy step was heard outside their door, and a minute later a grisly figure made its appearance. It was the major of Gerhardt's regiment, his face torn open by a terrible wound, his uniform stained with blood.

"It's all over," he thundered with a volley of soldiers' oaths. "We are surrounded—betrayed! *Tot und Holle*, sir, do you hear—betrayed!"

He could hardly contain himself, he dug his nails into his hands till the blood started.

Gerhardt, who had fallen into a half stupor, started up.

"What do you mean?" he ejaculated. "How betrayed?"

The major leant against the wall as though he had no more strength to stand, but his voice rose to a roar of mortification.

"They surrounded us, I tell you, and then a signal was given—someone in this very town sent up a signal for attack. I saw it with my own eyes."

"From where?"

"From this house, sir—from this house!"

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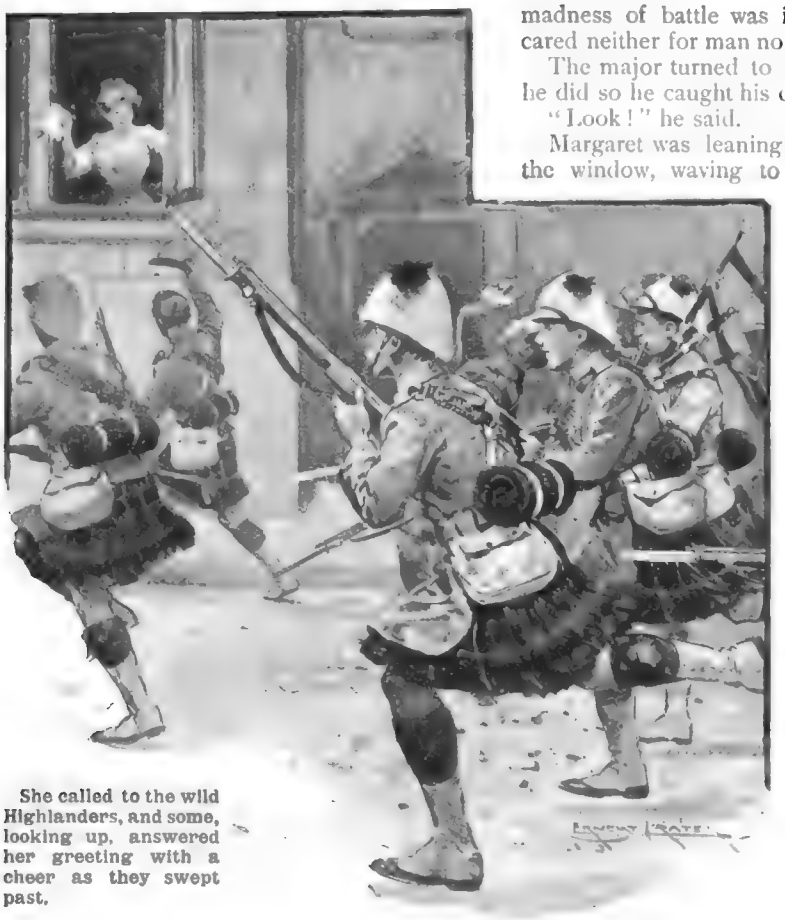

She called to the wild Highlanders, and some, looking up, answered her greeting with a cheer as they swept past.

In spite of weakness Gerhardt staggered to his feet.

"It's a lie!" he thundered. "There are no traitors here!"

Then as if by mutual consent both remained silent. A new sound caught their ears, the sound of cheering—high, full and triumphant, and the rush of on-coming feet.

Margaret had slipped to the window and torn it open. There they came, full gallop down the street, the brave Highlanders, their kilts stained with blood and dust, their khaki helmets awry, their bayonets glistening in the sunshine. From somewhere in the rear came the high, shrill tones of the bagpipes, mingling with the hoarser shoutings of men's voices. Woe to him who stood up against that mass of charging men! They swept all before them like leaves before a tempest, like straws before the rush of a mighty torrent. They tasted victory as a lion tastes blood and found it better than the richest wine. The madness of battle was in their veins; they cared neither for man nor death.

The major turned to the window, and as he did so he caught his companion's arm.

"Look!" he said.

Margaret was leaning against the side of the window, waving to the charging mass beneath. Great sobs shook her slender frame, but the light on her face was the light of gladness, of pride, of boundless triumph. She called to the wild Highlanders, and some, looking up, answered her greeting with a cheer as they swept past.

But the two men behind her were forgotten.

A groan escaped Gerhardt:

"My God, Margaret!" he muttered.

She heard nothing but the skirl of the bagpipes. They were playing "The March of the Cameron Men," and her heart answered to it as to an old, familar sound, as to the call of her blood and her nation.

Later, when she at last turned, the room was empty.

III.

After that six months passed.

She left her little desolate home and became a nurse. There where the battle was thickest, where the song of the bullets sounded loudest and fiercest, there it was that the wounded and the dying received her tender ministrations. Men were killed to right and left, but she remained unscathed.

"It was as if the accursed English bullets turned aside from her!" they said. Be that as it may, she moved with quiet, unmoved dignity into the very ranks of death, seeming to care nothing and to fear nothing, and in all that great army she was welcomed as a saint, almost as a martyr.

The Emperor himself, his highest generals

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were not as loved, as worshipped as this quiet woman who amidst the roar of battle soothed pain and anguish as though she were in the peace and silence of a sickroom. And somehow it grew to be known that there lay a great sorrow in the background of her life, and because of that and their love for her the rough soldiers treated her with a touching tenderness and respect.

It was a bare three weeks before the completion of the honourable peace of X——. The last battle of the too-equal war was being waged, the fiercest, the most awful of them all. There courage was pitted against courage, stoicism against stoicism, heroism against heroism. It seemed that each man must be shot down as he stood, for on both sides there was no wavering, no thought of turning back. And, as usual, where the dead lay thickest, there Margaret performed her duty.

And there also she found her husband.

He was lying on his face and she almost passed him, thinking him to be dead, when he groaned and rolled over on his side. She recognised him and for a moment stood as if paralysed, but it was only for a moment, and then she was kneeling down on the bloody earth, his head upon her arm. The bullets were whizzing round them and she looked about for a place of shelter. An overturned gun-carriage stood close at hand, and there she managed to drag him. She hardly knew whether he lived, but after she had forced a little brandy between the white lips his eyes opened.

"Why do you bother about me?" he said faintly. "Why not see to the fellows who want to live?"

Then he looked into his nurse's face.

"Margaret!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, Margaret," she answered with a sad little smile. "You need not repulse me because of that. To you I am only Sister Ursula."

He grasped her hand violently.

"What are you doing here?" he asked almost roughly. "You are risking your life—you will be killed!"

"I try to atone and why should I mind! I have lost everything that makes life of value."

"I also," he returned. "Thank God, I believe it's all over."

"No," she said sharply. He looked up.

"Do you still care?" he asked.

She turned her head away.

"I have no right to care."

His eyes closed and she busied herself binding up the jagged wound across his forehead. Then he spoke again.

"Did you know the major was killed ten minutes after we left you?" he asked.

"No."

"I held him as he was dying," he went on faintly. "He said to me: 'Go back to your poor little English wife. You were a fool to keep her so near her people. It was rough on her. Who knows if we should not have done the same! Go back.' Then he died."

The tears were rolling down Margaret's cheeks.

"But my heart was bitter even though it hungered after you," Gerhardt continued with an effort; "only later I began to see what a cur and a boor I had been to you. I remembered all the hard things I had said of your people; I knew it must have stung you. Now, with death so near, I understand."

She leant so near him that her breath fanned his cheek.

"Do you forgive me?" he asked.

"It is not for me to forgive."

"Shall we forgive each other?" he asked with a weak smile.

She strove to speak but could not.

"We have both atoned," he continued so low that it seemed as though he did not speak to her. "No man can say we have not paid the penalty for our faults and weakness, and when that is paid, then comes peace. Is that not so?"

She took his poor, wounded head on to her lap, so that it should rest more easily. A bullet shrieked past her ear and buried itself in the woodwork of the gun-carriage, but she did not hear it.

"Yes," she said, "then comes peace."

He smiled happily.

"When the war is over—if I get out of this alive," he said—"we will go back into the old, beautiful life. It will seem more beautiful because we both have suffered; we shall know how to cherish each other more truly, more understandingly."

"Can you—have you really forgiven?" she asked.

"There is nothing to forgive," he said. "I tell you I have learnt many things, and to love one's country dearer than one's life and happiness—that is the noblest thing of all!"

He shut his eyes for a moment and she thought he had fainted. Then he looked up.

"Oh, Margaret," he said weakly, "when the bullet knocked me over I thanked God, because life was nothing more to me—and now you have come back and I want to live."

She leant over him as if to shelter him.

"You shall," she said. "God is not cruel."

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My Pet Funny Story.

(Surely those whose profession it is to amuse should be the best judges of what is amusing! So I think it was rather a happy thought of mine to write to our leading humorous artists and ask them to contribute—

—to THE ROYAL *the funny story which most tickled them, and in each case to accompany the story with a drawing. The following pages show the result of my inquiries.—Ed.* ROYAL.)

THE TWO SMITHS.

Mr. Frank Reynolds' Favourite Story.

A certain Service Club included among its members two men rejoicing in the name of Smith.

Smith No. 1 saw in the Club letter-rack a missive bearing his name, which he opened, only to discover an urgent demand from the tailor of Smith No. 2. On the advice of his fellow members the letter was resealed and once more placed on the rack.

This was only just done before Smith No. 2 arrived. Opening the letter he scanned it hurriedly and, conscious of many eyes upon him, merely raised the letter to his lips with an indulgent smile, and murmured: "Silly little girl!"

KNEW HIS BUSINESS.

Mr. Will Owen's Favourite Story.

MENAGERIE PROPRIETOR (to applicant for post of keeper): "Now, what steps would you take if e broke loose?"

APPLICANT: "Long 'uns, guv'nor, long 'uns!"

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THE FAITHFUL PIGEON.

Mr. Tom Browne's Favourite Story.

There was once a Nottingham lace-maker who kept pigeons. One bird in particular was supposed to be a very good homer. The lace-maker, whose name was Tommy Foster, was always bragging about this particular pigeon, and declared that, no matter where the bird was thrown up, it would always return home. He wearied his friends with stories about its powers.

A friend of Tommy's, Jimmy Groves, cast a doubt upon these statements. Said he to Tommy one day:

"I don't believe so much about this pigeon o' yourn. Do ye mean to tell me that if this pigeon was thrown oop in London it would fly all the way back home?"

"Why," replied Tommy, "if you were to throw that bird oop in the South o' France it 'ud coom back hom'."

"I don't believe it!" said Jim. "Now, I am going to Lundon to-morrow. Yo' lend me your pigeon; when I get to St. Pancras, I'll throw it oop, an' I'll bet yer half-a-quid it do'n't coom hom'."

Tommy did not quite like the idea of parting with his valuable pigeon, even for a short time. Perhaps he didn't quite trust Jimmy. But finally he accepted the bet.

Jimmy took train for London the following day, bearing away the pigeon in a basket. Having the compartment to himself, he took out the pigeon and plucked out all its feathers until it was quite bald.

When Jimmy arrived at St. Pancras he went up a back street, took out the bird and threw it up, exclaiming:

"Noo, you beggar, try and get hom' if yo' can!"

Naturally, the bird fell to the ground with a flop.

Two days later Jimmy returned to Nottingham. He called on Tommy and inquired if the bird had arrived home.

"No," said Tommy, "it ain't. I can't understand it—I can't understand it at all. Did yer throw it oop all right?"

"Yes," replied Jim.

"Well," said Tommy, "it's a funny thing—it never 'appened afore."

"I suppose yer owe me half a-quid?" said Jim.

"I suppose I do" (brightening up). "Say, do yer mind waiting till Saturday? 'Tain't long to wait, and Lunnon's a long way off. Yer might give the bird a chance."

"I don't mind," said Jim, and the matter dropped for the time being.

On the following Saturday Jim paid Tom another visit, and the following extraordinary conversation took place:

"Well, Tommy, gies the half quid."

"You wait a minute. The bird's coom hom'. He's got corns on 'is feet as big as onions. *The beggar's walked it!*"

NATURE AVENGES ITSELF!

Mr. W. Heath Robinson's Favourite Story.

There was once a man who mixed sawdust in the meal with which he fed his hens. He thought they would never tell the difference. But they got even when the eggs were hatched! Half the brood were woodpeckers, and the result was disastrous!

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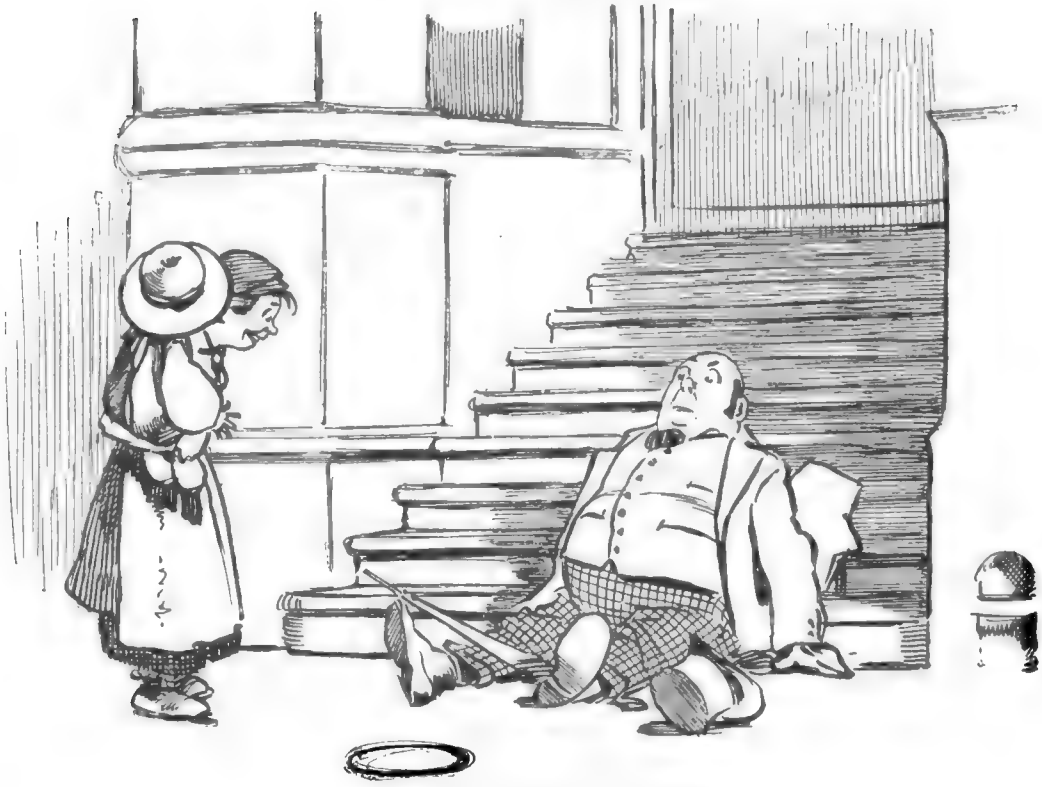

FOR BABY'S BENEFIT.

Mr. Hassall's Favourite Story.

I was one day walking along Cromwell Road, South Kensington, when an old gentleman fell down a flight of steps, leading from the front door of a house.

A little girl with a baby watched the performance, and then, grinning all over, said: "You might do it again, guv'nor—baby didn't s e it!"

IMPUDENCE!

Mr. Charles Pears' Favourite Story.

A navvy was "on the road" in search of work. He had tramped as far north as the borders of Yorkshire, when he met a small boy, of whom he asked: "How far is it to Doncaster, lad?"

The boy promptly replied: "There's a milestone behind thee."

"But I can't read, lad," said the navvy.

"It'll just suit thee, then," said the boy. "There's nowt on it!"

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THE TALE OF THE SCOTCHMAN WHO SAW A JOKE

Mr. Lawson Wood's Favourite Story.

An Englishman and a Scotchman, who were on a walking tour together, came one afternoon upon a finger-post bearing the following words:

Those who can't read can inquire the way of the blacksmith at the corner.

This appealed to the Englishman's sense of humour—so much so that the Scotchman wanted to know what he was laughing at. His attention being called to the notice, he read it gravely two or three times, and finally remarked that it was very thoughtful of someone to have put it there, but for his part he quite failed to see why it should call for any great outburst of merriment.

His friend laughed all the more at this, and the Scot, feeling that he had missed something, became engrossed in thought.

The travellers, having reached their destination, supped, and in due course retired to their respective rooms.

Somewhere in the small hours of the morning, the Englishman was aroused by a knocking at his door, followed by the appearance of the grave-faced Scot.

"Mon," he said, in answer to the inquiry respecting the reason of such an unusual visit. "I can see th' joke th' noo. Why, o' course th' blacksmeeth might be oot."

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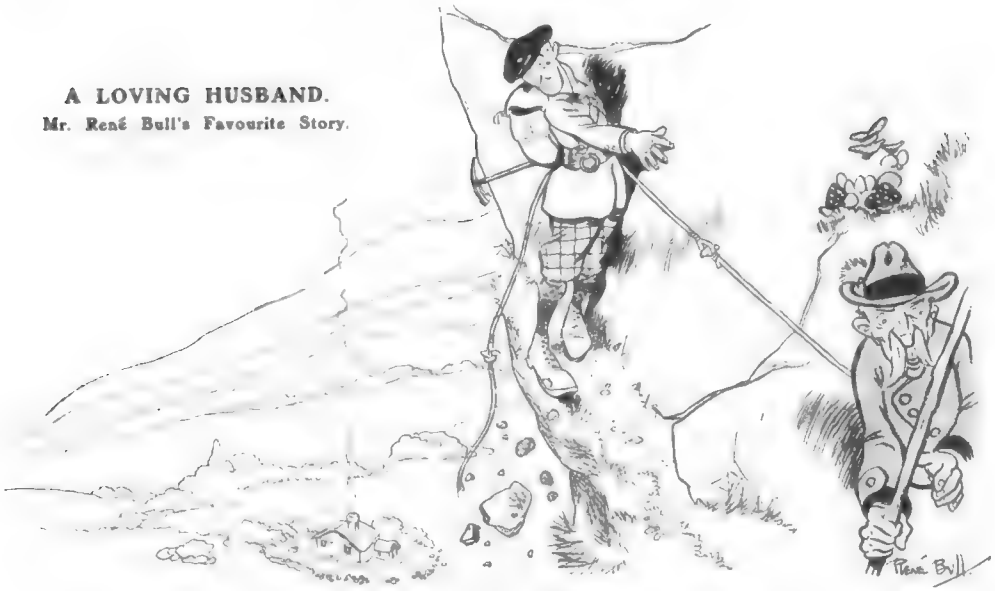
A LOVING HUSBAND.

Mr. René Bull's Favourite Story.



Several tourists, tied together with ropes, were climbing the Alps. Suddenly a rope snapped. There is a crash of falling stones and a scream.

"Good Heavens! Who's that gone?" shouts one tourist.

"I thought at first it was the guide," called back the man nearest the dangling rope, "but, thank goodness! it's only my wife, Martha!"

TRUE CHARITY!

Mr. Harry Furniss' Favourite Story.

An American tramp entered the gates of a pretty suburban villa, and, throwing himself down on the lawn, began to eat the grass. The old lady living in the villa, noticing this pathetic performance, came on to the doorstep and said:

"My good man, my good man, are you so hungry that you are obliged to eat the grass?"

'Yes, marm, I guess I am!"

"My good man, my good man, my eyes fill with tears, my heart bleeds for you! Come round to the kitchen door, come round to the kitchen door, *the grass grows longer there!*"

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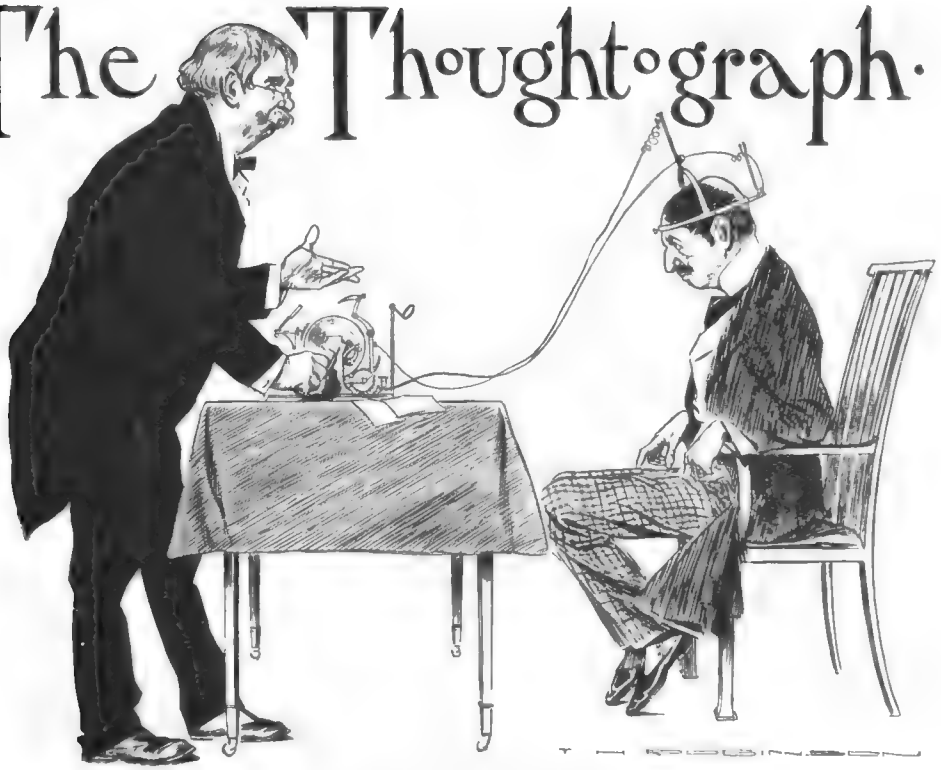
The Thoughtograph



The Story of the Most Dangerous Machine Ever Invented.

By Fox Russell.

Professor Foffenstein, the eminent but impecunious German *savant*, silently gloated over his latest scientific discovery as he touched up his dilapidated boots with some writing ink and the feather end of a quill pen. This invention, the Thoughtograph, would sell, he hoped, for such a sum as would enable him to spend the remainder of his days in his own country, revelling in the delights of sausages and *sauerkraut*. He had been casting about for some financier to take up the matter, and now thought he had found a likely purchaser.

Halkin Bulpett was a City magnate of great repute, and to this worthy did Professor Foffenstein betake himself.

After waiting twenty minutes in an outer room, the Professor was ushered into the presence of the financier, who nodded somewhat coldly, and waved his visitor to a seat.

"Now, Professor, I am a busy man, so you must excuse me if I ask you to state your business as briefly as possible," began Mr. Bulpett, in a somewhat pompous tone.

"Shoost zo," assented Herr Foffenstein, stooping down, at the imminent risk of his braces, to extract something from a black bag. "Shoost zo; I am a pizness man meinself. I haf giffen all my thoughts for zome dime to der idea of making a machine to enaple vun person to azertain ze thoughts of anozer person—dis, I haf called der Thoughtograph. Id vill dell you almost everyting you vants to know about your vriends. Id dell you who is honest, and alzo who is nod."

Mr. Bulpett began to feel interested. This was something novel. He said:

"This seems a wonderful toy of yours, Professor, but——"

"A doy? It is no doy—it is a vunderful machine vich vill——"

"Yes, yes. But I call anything a toy which has no commercial value."

"No gommercial value?" gasped the Professor, running his fingers through his hair.

"I repeat, no commercial value. How could you apply this machine to the real uses of the community?"

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The Professor, with a grim smile, commenced to remove his top coat.

"I vill egsplain," he said, as, after shedding his outer garment, he began unbuttoning yet another overcoat, "it vill dake me zome dime——"

"Perhaps, Professor, you wouldn't mind telling me all about it to-night. I have three or four people dining with me—one or two of them the very men to float this invention of yours, if they like it. Dine with us at eight, and then we can discuss the Thoughtograph at our leisure. The address is, 10 Green Park Lane."

* * * * *

Professor Foffenstein looked a somewhat strange figure as he entered Mr. Bulpett's splendid house that evening. His massive form was arrayed in a loose-fitting dress suit, "fearfully and wonderfully made"—a frilled shirt, with very low collar, and a wispish black tie, the bow of which had worked round under his right ear.

Once in his seat, Foffenstein tucked his serviette under his double chin and prepared for action. Soup, fish, *entrées*, joint, game, sweets and dessert were all treated by him with scant courtesy: he ate prodigious quantities of everything, whilst the finest Perrier Joûet, extra *sec*, went down his capacious throat as though it were the Lagerbeer of his native land.

Half-way through the feast, the conversation turned on the new invention, and the Professor waxed eloquent thereon.

"Id can do everyting, id vill make der sensation of der vorld!" he exclaimed enthusiastically.

"You say it will reveal a person's thoughts, Professor?" struck in his host critically. "Now, how would it be if the victim wished to conceal them? What would happen then?"

The ripples of Foffenstein's smile seemed to extend far down the front of his waistcoat.

"Noddings vould habben. Der true thoughts vould be revealed und recorded, all der same. Mit mein Thoughtograph, I dell you vhat you vas tinking about; I dell you vhere you vas schlept, last night; I dell you vot you tink of me," pressing a large, fat hand to his shirt-front, "and I even dell you vat you did vhen you vas schtayin' avay last veek."

"How very unpleasant — important, I mean," hastily corrected the host.

Several of the guests were profoundly interested in the Professor's recital. Little Mrs. Algy Fastley, with a slightly heightened colour, asked:

"Are there really such machines in existence? Oh, there are? Quite exciting, isn't it? And how long back do—er—do they—do these Thinkograph things reveal one's doings? Oh, not longer than that? Oh, that's alri——I mean, how interesting," and she promptly proceeded to choke over a crumb of bread as she thought of her last milliner's bill and her losses at bridge.

Then Stollway, the big banker, struck in:

"Er—Professor—this—this is a curious invention, very curious; but is it entirely reliable—um—eh?"

"*Ja*. Id gannot make a mistake."

"How very embarrassing—enchanting, I was going to say," stumbled the banker, "but although very clever and highly interesting, I can see no—er—*practical* value in these machines."

"There I don't agree with you," said the hostess, with meaning in her eye. "I think the Professor's invention is of the greatest practical utility."

Foffenstein indulged in a gratified smile. Turning to his hostess he thanked her for her compliment, and, in guttural accents, said:

"I shall be most happy to bresent you vith vun of der machines. *Hein!*" He broke off suddenly. "Zomeone haf kick me on der leg!"

Mrs. Fastley, who was seated next the Professor, hastened to apologise for her "inadvertence," whilst, the next moment, she cast a sidelong and despairing glance down the table at her host.

"I—I—it never struck me, Professor, this morning, when we were discussing your interesting invention, that it bristled with as many danger——possibilities—as these. Of course, in the hands of some unscrupulous people it would become—er—rather—er—rather—um—well, risky, eh?—decidedly risky. I think I understood you to say that this Thoughtograph would reveal whether a man was 'straight' in his dealings, eh? Would that not rather paralyse—er—hamper—er—industrial enterprise, for instance?"

"Just so," said Mr. Stollway, his thoughts straying off to memories of the last company he had floated.

"Nevertheless, Professor," observed Mrs. Bulpett, in decided accents, "I keep you to your promise of giving me one of these—er—highly interesting (Mr. Bulpett coughed uneasily) and amusing machines. I should say they would prove of immense value in the detection of—oh, all sorts of things!"

The Professor blattered on about his invention, guilelessly ignorant of the chill he

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had created in the social atmosphere, and Mrs. Bulpett, seeing that all attempts to revive the general conversation were futile, soon gave the signal for the ladies to leave.

Stollway was the first to speak.

"I don't think, Professor, I should go any further with this idea if I were you," he observed, in heavy, ministerial tones. "You see, reading another man's thoughts is all very fine, theoretically, but what business purpose could it serve?"

"Ah, it vill effegd a revolution in der business vorld, und in der social vorld as vell. Zu vill see—shoost only led me shtart a gumpany, und I vill astonish you mit der uses dot machine gan be pud to." He gulped down his seventh glass of claret and blinked benignly through his spectacles. Mr. Stollway had nothing more to say, and an awkward silence fell on the rest of those assembled. Mr. Bulpett tried to turn the conversation into other channels, but without much success. If the Thoughtograph had been an infernal machine (as, in some senses, it was!) no more absorbing interest could have been taken in it.

"I dell you vot you tink of me," pressing a large, fat hand to his shirt-front.

On entering the drawing-room the Professor was immediately pounced upon by his hostess.

"When am I to have the Thoughtograph, Professor?" she asked eagerly. Then, with rather a forced and malicious little laugh, she added: "If you have one here, we'll try it on my husband."

But Mr. Bulpett, at this moment, somewhat energetically drew the Professor's attention to a case of gorgeous Brazilian butterflies, whilst Flitterby laughed outright.

"Have you one of the machines here with you?" persisted Mrs. Bulpett. "If so, I'm sure Mr. Stollway would allow me to make my first experiment on him."

"Delighted, my dear lady," replied Mr. Stollway somewhat hurriedly, "but unfortunately I find I must be going," glancing, as he spoke, at the clock, which had stopped two hours before. "Good-night, *good*-night! I'm sure you'll have a most interesting experiment with—with your husband."

And as the banker edged for the door, Foffenstein asked:

"I shall fetch dot leedle machine, yes, no?"

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"Oh, do, Professor—nothing I should like better!" cried Mrs. Bulpett exultantly.

Then it was Mr. Charles Flitterby who "rose to the occasion."

"Allow me!" he cried, and rushed out of the room in search of the mystic revealer of thought.

Mr. Bulpett followed him.

"Id iss in a leedle plack pag in der hall!" called the Professor after them.

Five minutes—ten passed, and then Mr. Bulpett returned to the drawing-room with a bovine expression on his face. He had actually forgotten the black bag and the little machine! Flitterby? Oh, Flitterby had gone. Mr. Bulpett supposed that in seeing him off and exchanging a few words on business matters, the subject of the Thoughtograph had completely gone out of his mind. He was so sorry.

Then the Professor, assisted by Mr. Bulpett and the butler, turned over the hats, coats, carriage rugs, and wrappers, tumbling them all ruthlessly on the floor, whilst constantly repeating:

"Vhere ist mein leedle machine? Vhere he was? *Donnerwetter!* he must be somevheres; I pud 'im here meinselfs."

The search was continued for some time longer, but in vain. The Thoughtograph was nowhere to be found.

Mr. Bulpett was very sympathetic. He promised that strict search should be made for the missing treasure in the daylight.

"Meantime, Professor, I should be glad to see you at my office to-morrow at eleven. Stollway and Flitterby will be there. I should like you to meet us, and discuss the business asspect of this invention."

Under the influence of this suggestion, the Professor grew more cheery, and, hugging Mr. Bulpett in his arms, imprinted a large and flabby kiss on that astonished gentleman's cheek.

"*Ya*, I vill gome at elefen o'glock, und zu vill find der leedle machine by zat time, yes, no? *Aufwiedersehen*, mein vrendt." He put on his overcoat and hat. Mr. Bulpett deftly dodged another kiss, and then conducted the big German to the front door.

At a little before eleven next day, Messrs. Bulpett, Flitterby, and Stollway were assembled in the first-named gentleman's office, discussing the merits, and infinite possibilities, of the Thoughtograph. Each was doing his best to formulate some scheme for strangling that ingenious but embarrassing instrument at its birth.

Stollway was speaking in earnest tones. The banker was a man of great wealth and well known as a philanthropist. So, always comporting himself with the dignity owing to his position in the City, he took a high tone as, with thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, he leant back and said:

"Of course, it is really a matter of no particular moment to me, personally. Still, in the interests of the—er—the—er—the City community and the public at large, I think the Professor should not persevere with this invention. Even the peace of Europe might be seriously endangered by the injudicious use of this infer—of this thing. As to its far-reaching effect upon our commercial lives—well, *we* need hardly touch upon that, eh? *We*, at least, have nothing to fear!"

With an effort which brought the colour to his fat, puffy cheeks, he looked bravely at the other two. There was a momentary pause, and then Flitterby solemnly ejaculated the one word:

"Bosh!"

At that moment the Professor was announced. He shook his huge cape from off his shoulders, and soused himself into a chair in silence.

"We have found the machine, Professor," said Stollway, "and we have devoted very serious thought to the subject, and, whilst giving you every credit for the ingenuity displayed in enabling this machine to reveal the victim's—I mean the subject's—thoughts, we think it would be inadvisable to—er—to disclose such thoughts, in many instances; it would not be for the benefit of some of us here—of some people," he hastily corrected himself—"I may say, of a good many people—that you should persevere to perfect this diabol—dearly loved—project of yours, my dear Professor."

"Bud vhat do I gain by giffing him up? Id iss complicated, id is true—but mit der aid of mein notes, I gan make der machine do all dot I say."

"Stay," cried Bulpett, "you say 'with the aid of your notes' you can make the machine work. Does that mean that it would be innocuous — I mean ineffectual — without them?"

"Vell, yes, dot is zo. Mein notes 'ave dake me years of——"

"Just so, just so," replied Mr. Bulpett, who was anxious not to waste time. "Just give me a moment's talk with my friends here, Professor, and——"

Foffenstein bowed and walked over to the window.

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But talk was superfluous. Mr. Bulpett simply raised his eyebrows in mute inquiry to Stollway and Flitterby, who both nodded their acquiescence. Bulpett held up three fingers of his right hand, and again they both nodded, Stollway turning away with a sigh, for he did not enjoy what Shakespeare calls the "sweet sorrow" of "parting" in any sense.

Addressing the Professor, Mr. Bulpett resumed:

"We have come to the conclusion, Professor, that, though devoid of commercial value in its present stage, the machine may have a future, and therefore we are willing to purchase your notes and all patent rights from you. At the same time the machine, in its present state, is worth little. I doubt if it can do what you boasted of last night; the box is here; are you prepared to verify your description? Try it on me—on Stollway, I mean."

"Shoost zo; I do him at vonce."

"No, no!" cried Stollway hastily, "no, no, Bulpett. You say you don't believe in it; let him try it on you."

"Oh, I don't mind," replied Bulpett, assuming a hardy air.

He rose, and produced from his safe the weird instrument, and Foffenstein at once proceeded to make his experiment. Adjusting the delicate wires, he focussed Mr. Bulpett's somewhat conical-shaped head, turned a small brass handle, and, staring at the instrument, began:

"Zu are now tinking how cheap zu gan buy dis leedle machine; but zu haf already resolved to buy him, anyhow."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Bulpett, rather scornfully.

The Professor seemed annoyed. He turned the handle vigorously, and referred to a bundle of notes lying on the table.

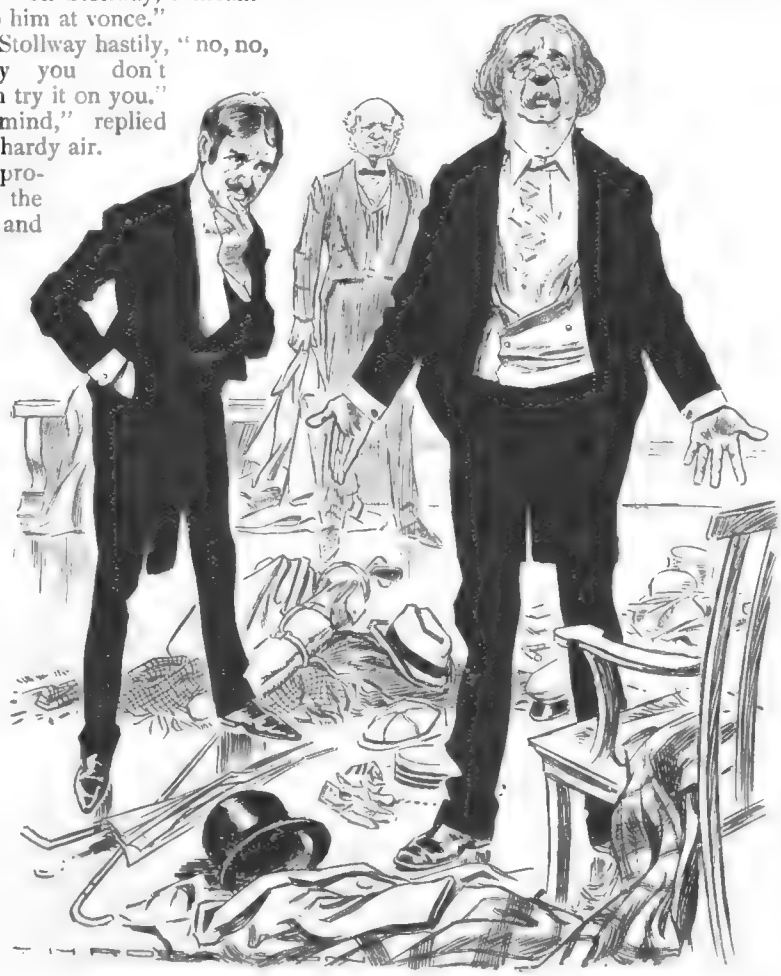
"Der las' gompany zu bring out zu make a vot zu call a rig on ze market, zu bersuade zu vriends to take dose shares, und zu know dot it iss all a swind——"

"Thanks, thanks, Professor. Er—I—I—really don't believe a word of it; but—well—now try it on Stollway."

But Stollway was "not taking any."

"Sorry, my dear fellow, but I am much pressed for time," he said, as he quickly rose to go. "Bulpett," he continued, "I leave the matter entirely in your hands."

Half-an-hour later, Professor Foffenstein also left the same apartment, *minus* "dot leedle machine," his notes, and an agreement divesting himself of all rights, etc., in the Thoughtograph, but *plus* a cheque for three thousand sovereigns bearing the perfectly solvent signature of John Samson Bulpett.



"Vhere ist mein leedle machine?"

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MY LADY'S MINIATURE.

I would paint your miniature,—
Sweetest of sweet faces,
Half-coquettish, half-demure,
Full of tender graces;
Cheeks where dimples come and go
As I watch and wonder;
Rosebud lips where kisses grow
Worth a kingdom's plunder!

Hide-and-seek the sunbeams play
Through your silken tresses,
Humble tribute I must pay
For your least caresses;
Witchcraft from your sunny eyes
Binds your slave in fetters,
Though in books you are not wise—
Scarce can read your letters!

Love has limned for me your face
Loved beyond all measure,
But no velvet, jewelled case
May enshrine my treasure;
Time would tarnish pearl or gold,
Other hands might claim you—
Darling little four-year-old
In my heart I'll frame you!

Mary Farrah.

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CONFESSIONS OF LITTLE CELEBRITIES

II.—MASTER MAX DAREWSKI.

The most Brilliant Boy Composer in the World. He is also the Youngest Band Conductor.

I DON'T think it's at all nice to have to make confessions, because you have to say so much about yourself. I'd far rather talk about my ponies, and the fun I have in the garden playing horses with other little boys, but I suppose I had better make up my mind to get it over —so here goes!

Well, I composed my first piece when I was five years old. That was my waltz "Le Rêve." Of course I did not write down the music then, for I had had no lessons, but I had it in my head all the same, and very soon afterwards I began to learn the piano under Mr. Carl Weber. I think I wrote the music about six months after I had begun my harmony lessons, and I could play it on the piano at that time from memory.

Next to "Le Rêve," I think my march "England's Crown" is the best known of my pieces. I composed it in honour of King Edward's coronation, and it was played by 250 bands on Coronation Day in all parts of the country. I have written several other marches since then, the chief one being "The Kilties," which I dedicated to Mr. W. F. Robinson, the conductor of the famous Canadian band.

Another of my marches is the "Royal Standard" Grand March, and one of the latest the "Besses March," dedicated to the famous Besses o' th' Barn band, which has just started on a long tour in the Colonies. I was asked to accompany them on this tour, but my father and my masters thought that I was not yet old enough to take such a long journey. Last year I wrote a descriptive orchestral piece called "Nelson's Victory, 1805," in honour of the Trafalgar celebration.

Do you know, I really believe I am the youngest conductor in the world, for I was only eight years old when I first appeared in that way at Bournemouth in December, 1903. Mr. Dan Godfrey, the conductor of the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, asked me to conduct his band at a concert in the Winter Gardens, and during an interval in the performance he presented me with a silver-mounted ivory bâton, which is, of course, one of my "treasures."

Since that day I have appeared twenty times at Bournemouth. I have also conducted at several orchestral concerts in the Kursaal at Bexhill, on the invitation of Earl de la Warr, but I think the biggest thing I have done was to conduct at a performance of the National Festival of Massed Bands at the Crystal Palace last year. I had upwards of five thousand instrumentalists under my bâton on that occasion, and am very proud indeed of the testimonial that I afterwards received, signed by all the conductors of the 160 bands engaged.

When I was nine years old I conducted the Honourable Artillery Company's band at a

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fête in the Royal Botanical Gardens, and I afterwards received a very nice letter in which Princess Christian, who had been present, said how much she had enjoyed the performance.

I have also conducted at concerts in the Queen's Hall and at Covent Garden, as well as at benefit performances in the Waldorf and Apollo Theatres.

I'll tell you a secret if you like. When I first came out at Bournemouth I was playing horses just before I had to conduct. I had six encores, and would not go on any more because I wanted to get back to my play! That was very naughty, I know, but I'm afraid I'm not always so good as I ought to be. I remember once, when I was very little indeed, locking myself into the music-room at home in order to have a good time with the piano. When I tried to unlock the door I found I could not turn the key. I tried and tried, but it was no good, so I just went back to the piano and played.

Meanwhile, my mother had sent for a workman to get the door open. It took him a whole hour to do this, so I had a splendid practice, but I must confess that I was beginning to be just a wee bit frightened.

I am very fond of composing. I sit down to play something and it comes into my head. I can always remember it the next time, for if I play a thing once I do not forget it. I can't compose unless I feel as though I want to. I like best to sit at the piano in the evening before it is quite dark. The music seems to come then quite easily, especially if it is for the words of a song. I have just composed the music for a song called "A World of Roses," which Madame Melba has promised to sing.

Of course, I love music beyond everything else. I have a piano in my bedroom, and I am practising on it almost before I am dressed in the morning. In fact, my father and mother have to be very strict with me, or I should hardly ever be away from the piano.

I work very hard at my music, I can tell you, and when I was seven years old I won the bronze medal at the Academy of Music for counterpoint and harmony against forty competitors, the youngest of whom was twenty-five years of age. I also hold three Academy Scholarships, but I mean to work harder than ever in spite of all this.

Every morning, as a rule, I practise for an hour and then go for a drive, returning in time for a piano lesson. After lunch I work with my governess, and then I have short lessons from my French and Italian masters.

I have two ponies. One is very wild, but he looks very smart. I drive everywhere in my pony-cart.

I then go for a walk or play tennis, or romp about with my boy-friends. In the evening I practise once more, and, when I feel inclined, compose. I am fond of my lessons, and I like reading. I know I have a very great deal to learn, and I mean to work as hard as my parents and the doctor will allow me. Altogether I am a very happy boy, and very lucky to have so many kind friends.

I have told you about some of my "treasures," but not all. I have a telegram which Queen Alexandra sent me when I wrote to her on her birthday, and a photograph of Madame Melba, which she gave me herself, and on which she wrote: "To little Max Darewski, with much love, from Madame Melba."

Then, besides the bâton which Mr. Dan Godfrey gave me, there are a gold watch and a gold medal, both of which were presented to me at Bournemouth. And last of all there is the emerald and pearl tie pin, in the shape of a shamrock leaf, given to me by Lord and

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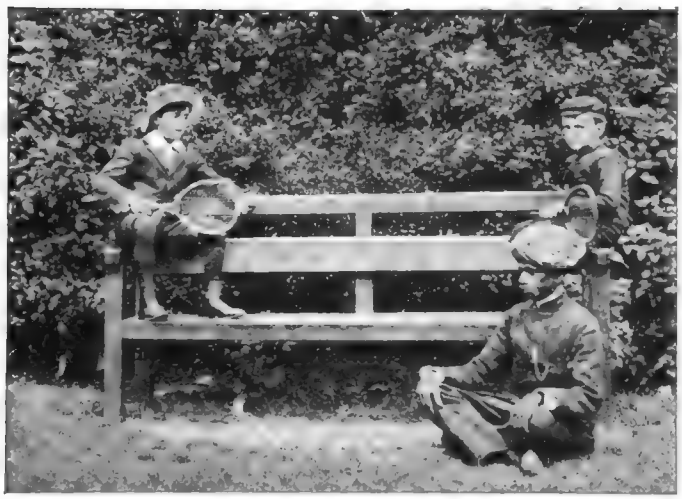

I often play tennis with a little friend of mine who has just come back from India, and who is generally accompanied by a native servant.

Lady Aberdeen, before whom I played privately in Dublin, not to speak of the beautiful silver casket given to me by the ladies of Dublin. Oh! I had almost forgotten the "Royal Sweets"—that's a lovely box of chocolates which Lady Aberdeen gave me and which are not going to be eaten. Don't you think I am very lucky to have so many beautiful things given to me?

Of my private "treasures"—I mean presents which I have had from my parents and other relations—I think I am fondest of my little pony trap. I have two ponies—one is rather wild, but he looks very smart; the other is a very quiet Shetland pony. I drive everywhere in my pony-cart, but I can drive a horse just as easily. I once drove a horse—quite a big one—through the streets of London without an accident, which is rather good for a little boy like me.

I have quite a lot of other amusements, too. Cricket I love, but I think I enjoy tennis most of all. I have had tennis lessons from the champion player of India, so I suppose that is partly why I like it so much. I play every day in the summer, and have rare games with other boys in the garden behind our house.

Then there's swimming. I love swimming, and when at the seaside I have a dip every day. Do you know I pulled a little girl out of the sea once! It was at Birchington, two years ago, and the people there made a fuss about it; but I don't think they need have done so, because I enjoyed the swim and I had only to go a very little way. I am also very fond of photography. I have a little Kodak which I always take with me when I am traveling, and I have got some very nice snap-shots. I don't mind very much being photographed, but it's far better to stand behind your own camera than in front of someone else's.

I have been trying for ever so long to get a good photo of my dog, but I have not yet succeeded in making him keep still. As soon as you put him in position he thinks you are trying to play some new game with him, and immediately begins to roll about on his back, with his legs in the air. He once saved my life by waking me up one night when the curtains of my bedroom had been set on fire by a lighted candle. If it had not been for my dog I don't think these Confessions would ever have been written.

In the garden at the back of our house I sometimes help to keep the paths tidy, and the gardener is a great chum of mine.

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Real Life Romances.

If You have Gone Through any Unusual Experience, Write it up and Send it to the Editor. He will Pay You Well if He Accepts it.

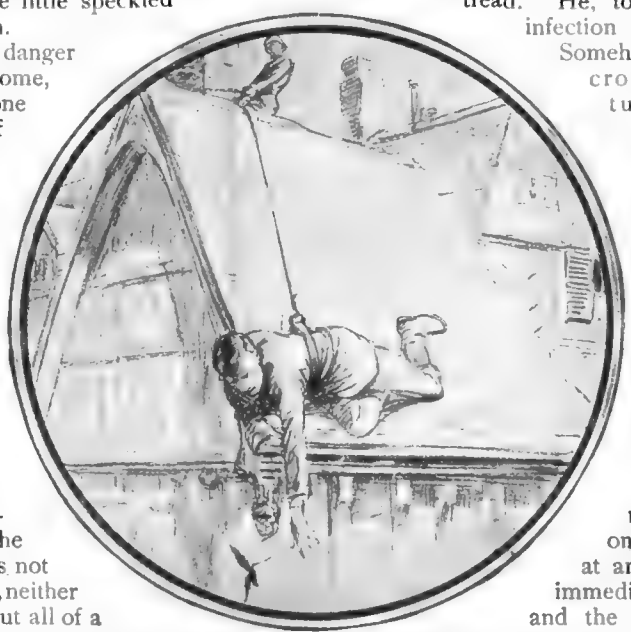
The Rescue.

A STORY OF HUMANITY.

THIS is the story of a swallow. Just a little bird flying swiftly here and there over the house-tops in the neighbourhood of Berlin. Sheltered beneath the eaves of a house near-by, his little mate sat patiently in her tiny mud home awaiting the day when her five little speckled eggs would hatch.

But there was danger lurking near his home, not the danger one might expect of a fierce hunter cat, but simply a little loop of string, dangling in the breeze—and a piece of string to a swallow is as very thick rope is to a man.

Whether the little swallow over-sped himself, or whether he was careless, does not concern this story, neither can it be told. But all of a sudden the swallow felt himself pulled up sharply, and his leg nearly jerked off. He fluttered frantically, but the thing, whatever it was, held him firmly. And the little hen-bird, no doubt, wondered why her lunch was so long delayed.



One of the men cautiously slid down the roof.

What would have happened "if" is simple to surmise. The next day's sun would have shone upon a little bundle of lifeless feathers, dangling in the breeze at the end of a loop of string. But the all-important "if" took first shape in the sharp eyes of a little Berlin school-boy. He it was that perceived the plight of the little bird, and he stopped and watched with sympathetic gaze. Then someone else passing by paused on his way. And by-and-by more people came up, and they, too, stopped; and still more and more, until the street below was massed with upturned faces all filled with pity and concern for the little swallow held helpless in the loop of string.

Presently a policeman, fearing, it may be, a street brawl, moved up with measured tread. He, too, soon felt the infection of compassion. Somehow, to him the crowd naturally turned. But to climb on to the roof, and down to the gable, was quite beyond the constable's capacity.

"Call the fire-brigade," someone suggested. "They have ladders."

Whether the remark was made facetiously one cannot say, but at any rate the crowd immediately took it up, and the policeman, overwhelmed by much persuasion, at length broke a fire-call, and telephoned for a couple of firemen to come with ropes.

At last the bright helmets of two firemen appeared amongst the crowd. A score of voices eagerly voiced the little swallow's plight, and begged them to hasten to the rescue.

The firemen quickly clambered on to the roof. A cheer rose from the upturned faces, Knotting a rope round his waist, while his comrade leant his back against a chimney, one of the men cautiously slid down the roof. And then another roar, mingled with many sighs of relief, went up from the crowd as they saw the little swallow released from the string by the fireman, and sail into the air little the worse for its exciting adventure.

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Old Casimir's Heir.

A WEIRD ROMANCE.

MICODEM POTOCKI read again and again the legal-looking document which had come like a rainbow in the midst of a storm of less pleasant missives.

Yesterday he was simply plain Micodem Potocki! To-day he was the noble Count Micodem Potocki! Yet what was a title compared with the vast fortune that his dead relative had amassed? The new fledged Count paced the length of his room excitedly. Debt—ah, what was debt—now? He glanced contemptuously at the less pleasant contents of the postman's bag scattered on his breakfast table. He would show *them* that he was no penniless spendthrift—*now*.

With these good intentions in his mind, and the all-important document in his breast-pocket, he called upon the legal firm that had apprised him of his good fortune.

Yes, Count Casimir was certainly dead, the lawyer informed him, and then proceeded to explain that his late client was extremely eccentric. The old man had talked much with him concerning his heir. It was entirely owing to the dead relative's business abilities and shrewdness that the Mionczynski estates had been freed from mortgage and vastly extended, and the old man lived in fear lest his heir should squander and destroy what he considered his life's work.

Count Micodem Potocki assured the lawyer that no one amongst all his acquaintances was more fit to inherit the estate than he himself. And with a light heart he left the office, some days later attended the funeral, and in due course took possession of the inheritance.

In a short while he proved himself to be of a very different nature from the old Count Casimir, and, if gossip be true, his actions, so the tenants of his estate declared, were sufficient to bring old Casimir from the family vault.

* * * * *

One day, not many months ago, a bent old man knocked at the castle doors.

"Is the Count within?" he asked.

The powdered footman gasped, and staggered back a pace.

"My card," said the old man grimly, and dropped the pasteboard in the trembling footman's hand.

* * * * *

Count Micodem stared long and earnestly at a little piece of white cardboard. Then he glanced at the trembling footman.

"Impossible!" he exclaimed. "Let me see the man."

The Count stared with eyes almost bursting from their sockets. A bent, wizened old man stood motionless at the door.

"You recognise me, Micodem Potocki," he said—after a lapse of intense silence.

"You are like my deceased uncle," returned the Count, with an effort controlling his voice.

"I am Count Casimir von Mionczynski." The old man laughed grimly.

"But you are dead," his heir replied, taking courage in the thought. "I myself was present at your burial."

"A lie," chuckled the wizened figure. "There was nothing buried but a few stones. It cost me a thousand pounds to act this little drama," explained the Count. "But it was worth it. I wanted to see how you would act when you came into my title and fortune. For three months I have been watching you. Now I shall again take back my title and estate, and later on consider whether I should do right to intrust you with my riches, when, some day, I really die."

"A lie," chuckled the wizened figure.

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The Young Toreador.

THE ROMANCE OF A BOY'S AMBITION.

DRIVING a pen over sheets of smooth foolscap is not a very exciting means of earning one's living. So thought young Faustino Jardiel as he sat employed in the aforementioned occupation in a hot little office in Carabanthel, a small town near Madrid. Still it gave one time to dream, and when one is not more than sixteen, and a Spanish boy in the land of Don Quixote, one's dreams can be very exciting.

But young Faustino had greater ambitions than to emulate the deeds of the famous Don. There was the bull-fight. All day long visions of it would gleam in bright panoramas before his eyes. His pen became no longer a mere ink-stained point of metal. Now in imagination it stood out, gleaming bright and sharp, a dart of the proud bandolero. The din of the bull-fight rang in his ears—the cries of delighted men and women, as a bandolero leapt aside and deftly dodged the furious onrush of the bull.

The bull wheeled as one of Faustino's darts fell harmlessly at his feet.

An angry remonstrance from the head clerk brought Faustino back to the dreary monotony of reality. A dunderhead! Was that the expression his senior had used when he pointed out the futility of regarding nine and seven as fifteen? A mistake the boy admitted, but not of sufficient greatness to warrant such a rude remark. A dunderhead! *He* that would one day become the most famous toreador in Spain. *He* who would be courted by nobles and smiled on by fair dames.

A certain Tuesday found young Faustino, his eyes bright with excitement, seated in the Plazade Toros close to the arena.

This was the day of his life. At any rate so the boy thought. Here in a short time he would show the vast crowd what he was destined to become.

A great roar rose from the audience as the bandoleros entered the ring, and still a greater one when they began to goad the bulls to fury with their little, needle-sharp darts.

How simple to do what they were paid so well to do, thought young Faustino. Now one of the gaily-clothed bandoleros dashed a red cloth in the eyes of a snorting bull. The next instant he was flying for his life. He was caught! The boy held his breath with excitement No, he was safe! With a smile the man had leapt nimbly aside, and hurled one of his darts, as the great beast thundered past him.

How unutterably easy, thought young Jardiel, and his heart beat high with hope. A moment later the crowd of shouting onlookers was hushed to silence. This was no bandolero advancing boldly on the already maddened bull! This was no expert that they saw, watchful of every tremor in the huge brute, and ready to anticipate its every movement!

The bull wheeled as one of Faustino's darts fell harmlessly at its feet. Then an infuriated bellow rose from the arena. Women fainted and bandoleros rushed vainly forward, as in a thundering, swirling cloud of dust they saw the boy tossed high by the bull, tossed again, and hurled from the ring in a senseless heap among the spectators.

The doctor told Faustino that he was the luckiest boy in Spain to escape with no worse harm than he did. And Faustino has decided that it is much easier and pleasanter to sit at a desk even if it is in a hot little office than to evade the rush of a Spanish bull.

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A Fight to the Death.

THE STORY OF A DOG'S STRATEGY.

THIS story is told by Professor Durand, of Cornell University. It concerns a collie dog, of which he is the owner, and a sleek, muscular bull-terrier.

The dogs were mortal enemies. When they met they growled, and, but for their respective masters, who generally discountenanced open hostility, they would have satisfied their honour at the point of their respective teeth.

Chance, however, one day afforded the opportunity that both had so often sought. It happened whilst the collie was out with its master. Then the bull-terrier appeared, this time alone.

The fact that it was now free from all restraint on the part of its master appeared to make the terrier even more pugnacious than usual, and it soon became impossible for the Professor to prevent a battle.

The dogs advanced towards each other with measured steps. A yard apart they halted, each making a fierce demonstration of teeth.

To the onlooker they appeared an ill-matched couple—the bull-terrier, low-legged, a mass of muscle within a tough, close-haired coat, and the stately collie, long-haired and shapely mouthed.

The fight began.

Bounding forward, the terrier made to grip his opponent by the throat. The collie leaped aside, and snapped back furiously. Then the two rolled over, a savage snarling filled the air — the collie was being worsted.

The collie hurled himself against the terrier and rolled him headlong down the gorge.

Meanwhile the Professor watched at a distance, fearing to venture near the enraged animals.

At last, with a desperate struggle, the collie regained its feet. Both dogs stood panting, too breathless to continue the fight without a respite. The collie was bleeding, and a red patch deepened on the terrier's white coat.

For half a minute the combatants thus faced each other. Then once more the bull-terrier advanced, and then an unlooked for thing happened.

The collie, instead of presenting a bold front as he had done before, turned tail. Mad with rage, the terrier rushed in pursuit. Across the grass they flew, straight to where the Professor knew lay a deep gorge the collie made.

A few feet from the brink of the cliff the collie pulled up, and once more made to face his enemy. The feint was brief.

To the puzzled onlooker it was apparent that the collie had some deep ruse in mind. Now he was circling around the bull-terrier, each moment enticing him nearer to the brink of the gorge.

Then the strategy became apparent. With a sudden swerve the collie hurled himself against the bewildered terrier, and rolled him headlong down the gorge.

The terrier, with frightened yaps, made desperate efforts to arrest his headlong descent by snapping at the vegetation growing on the sides of the gorge.

His efforts were made in vain. He came to earth with a crash at the bottom of the gorge, and lay still.

Thus, by strategy, the collie won the battle.

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Mr. John Pennell.

No. XXII.—WITH LIVINGSTONE IN DARKEST AFRICA.

From the Narrative of Mr. John Pennell, Survivor of the Second Expedition.

As Told to Walter Wood.

The very mention of the name of Dr. David Livingstone compels a mental picture of dauntless travels and incredible privations in the heart of the then unknown Africa. With the exception of Sir John Kirk, who was Chief Officer on Dr. Livingstone's Government Expedition to Africa in the years 1858-64, the only known survivor of the doctor's travels is Mr. John Pennell, who was "lent" by the Royal Navy for service in that expedition. The great explorer reached Africa in 1840, and for sixteen years laboured without cost to the inhabitants as a medical missionary. In 1859 he returned at the head of a Government expedition to explore the Zambesi. He came home in 1864, having buried his wife; but in 1866 he started on his third journey to the Dark Continent, a venture full of disasters, which ended in his death. His heart was buried in Africa; his embalmed body was brought to England by two faithful negroes, who suffered countless hardships, and in 1874 was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Ask any man, off-hand, what picture he has formed in his mind of the most intrepid traveller that ever penetrated Darkest Africa, and he will tell you, I doubt not, that it is the picture of a taciturn, grave, undaunted Scotchman, one who had seen too much of life's stern perils to have much laughter left in him. And in the main he will be right. Such was the man I expected to find when, on the quarter-deck of H.M.S. *Lyra*, I was asked to volunteer for service with Dr. Livingstone, and got my first sight of him, and for the first time heard his voice.

The *Lyra* was a nine-gun sloop, and I was a stoker in her. We were cruising off the Cape of Good Hope after slavers, and in 1861 were sent to the mouth of the Zambesi with Bishop Mackenzie and his party, who were to join Dr. Livingstone. The Doctor, as we always called him, was expecting the sloop, and he came out to us in his little launch, the *Pioneer*, almost as soon as we had anchored outside the bar. The Doctor's engineer had been invalided, and he wanted a good stoker. My captain, representing that the appointment would very likely be a good thing for me, gave me the chance of accepting it. I said I would take it, although after three years' slave-chasing in the tropics I should have been glad to go home for a change.

So, with my mind made up, I was standing on the quarter-deck, waiting to talk with the Doctor, and while I waited I had an experience which rarely fell even to those who were brought much in contact with him. I heard him crack a joke. I had heard a great deal of Dr. Livingstone, and now that he was so near I could not resist the curiosity to look at him, which I did by glancing through the saloon skylight, for he was below in the officers' mess, taking a drink with them.

I saw a rough, rather stern man, who looked as if he had had a great deal of knocking about—a very plain, blunt-spoken man, who clearly knew his own mind, and as clearly a man who never turned back, but whose motto was "Forward!" He had already been out several years, and was now on his second travels.

The Doctor was drawing a cork out of a soda-water bottle, and as it came away with a bang he laughed and said "Pop! That puts me in mind of the young ladies of the

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refreshment-bars at home. They always say 'Pop!'"

That was the first time I saw and heard the great explorer; and I remember the incident so well because it was not very often that you could get a smile or a joke out of him; and can you wonder, when you remember the long years he had spent in those gloomy, awful forests, where white men had never before set foot, and where he was a constant witness of death, misery, and ignorance, which pierced him to the very core of his great, kind heart?

When the Doctor came on deck, I soon struck my bargain with him. He was perfectly clear and plain as to what he wanted and what I was to do. He told me he thought I should be with him for a year, because that would be the shortest time in which he could get another man out from England, and that as soon as the new engineer came he would send me home by the first ship. I know that he would have kept his word; but at the end of the twelve months, to anticipate a little, I found that I liked the work, and so I remained with him, sharing in all his perils, explorations, sufferings, and adventures for three years and three months.

We all—the Doctor, the Bishop, and the rest of the party—went in the *Pioneer* up the River Rovuma, where he hoped to be able to found a mission station. But the natives were none too partial to the white men, and they assembled on the banks with their bows and arrows and guns, and threatened to destroy us. Arrows were by no means pleasant things to meet in those parts, because they were poisoned. At one time a poisoned arrow passed between the Doctor and the Bishop, but luckily it missed them both.

Now the Doctor was a man who at all times was mindful of the lives of the poor creatures he had gone out to help, and shrank from hurting them. He never used force when kindness would answer; but there came times when he was compelled to retaliate. This was one of them. The natives, it was plain, meant to destroy us, so that they could plunder the boat, and they fired upon us, disregarding the Doctor's peaceful promises and advances. As a last resource he returned their fire with our own, just two or three shots; and their attack collapsed. Then he pacified them with presents of calico and beads, and other things of which the native heart was fond. They explained to him that the river and the country were theirs; and he replied by telling them that he had not come to take the land away, but merely to explore it and try to do them good. He had a magical influence over the native at all times, and seldom failed to get by kindness what other men secured by force and brutal treatment.

It was now that I saw how badly mauled the Doctor's left arm had been in his famous encounter with a lion. The limb seemed to be almost useless; he could not raise it above a certain level, so that, when he wanted to fire his rifle, he had to do two very strange things—either employ a rest which he had had specially made, or a native's shoulder or crouched back, or the fork of a tree. His rifle fired a big bullet, about two-and-a-half inches long, and the nose of this was explosive, so that when the missile struck its target, say an elephant, it would spread and make a wound about six inches in diameter. That may sound terrible, but it was merciful; and never was there a more humane sportsman than the Doctor. His shooting was done mostly for food—he never fired wantonly.

When we got up the river we found that the passages were so narrow, and that there were so many cataracts, that the *Pioneer* could not be got through them. We accordingly turned back, to reach the Zambesi by way of the river Shiré, which we were the first white men ever to navigate. Hereabout the natives were very civil and harmless, and stood on the banks watching us, wondering in their own primitive fashion what we were, and from what part of the world we came.

The *Pioneer* is worth a short description. She was a fine little paddle-boat, about 114 feet long and 14 feet beam, shallow, of course, as she had been specially built for river exploration, and with a pair of Penn's oscillating engines of 40-horse power. The boilers had very large furnaces, so that the *Pioneer* could burn wood fuel—often enough the only sort we could get, as coal was unobtainable.

Fever attacked us in the Rovuma, as it often did; but it was worse there than in the Zambesi. Most of the crew were down, and although we lost no man still it was a very near touch, and only the Doctor's constant care and discipline, with the help of Dr. Kirk—now Sir John Kirk, and I believe the only survivor of the expeditions except myself—kept us alive and well.

Vividly I remember the early morning parade for the Doctor's special mixture—quinine and port wine—and the wry faces we made about the former, and the crafty efforts some of the old salts made to get the wine unmixed! But there was no escaping the

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Doctor, and down the mixture had to go. It saved many a life.

The engineer was laid up, and my fellow-stoker with him, so that I was left single-handed with the boilers and engines. We were under sail, but it came on to blow a gale of wind, and we were driving with the current into a very dangerous group of islands. Things were beginning to look serious, when the Doctor came and said:

"Can you manage to get steam up and look after the engines?"

It was a pretty big task for one man, but I did it and went below and got up steam. Hot work it was, too, in that tropical climate, feeding the big fires with heavy logs of wood. I was hard at it for the rest of the day and during the whole of the night, while the *Pioneer* struggled against the current and the gale.

It was pretty clear that no man could continue to work like that, and the Bishop and Dr. Kirk and others who were on board saw it. The Bishop, who was dressed in a white flannel cricketing suit, and wore a blue belt with brass buckles, came to the engine-room hatchway and said: "Pennell, can I help you in any way?"

"No, thank you, Bishop," I answered. "I think I can manage. And I'm afraid you don't know much about engines."

He laughed. "Perhaps I can help you to fire," he said; and, to my amazement, down into that stifling stokehole he came and began feeding the furnaces with the logs, which the Doctor and Dr. Kirk and the others handed down through the hatchway.

The Bishop would take the logs and place them in front of the fires, ready for me to put on, because a good deal of experience was necessary to lay them so that they would burn to the best advantage. And often enough the Doctor would say jokingly: "Now then, Bishop! Fire up! Here are some more logs!"

For three whole days the Bishop stuck to his work; he never gave it up until we got to the Zambesi, and the sick men were able to return to their duty. By that time, with grease and smoke and cinders, the flannel suit was totally black. So was the Bishop, and I was able to tell him with perfect truth that he was a splendid fireman. I think I am the only stoker who can boast that he has had a Bishop helping him at his work. The Bishop was a good example of a Christian and a gentleman, and bitter indeed was our grief when not long afterwards he and a missionary named Mr. Burrup died of fever. They were capsized while in a canoe, and the Bishop, already weakened through illness, succumbed. Very soon afterwards Mr. Burrup, after burying the Bishop, died too.

This was only one of the many tragedies I came across in that terrible, unknown Dark Continent. It was a ceaseless fight against natural difficulties, distrustful heathens, pestilential climates, and discouragements of every sort. And there came one great, dark day when it seemed as if even the Doctor's iron constitution would collapse, and his inflexible hope and courage fail him. That was when his wife, the famous Dr. Moffatt's daughter, who was with us, died of the fever which had attacked her while we were at a little river village called Shupanga. She fell dangerously ill on the Wednesday; and until the Sunday her husband and Drs. Kirk and Mellor did everything within the power of man to save her. But on the Sunday evening she died. She passed away unconscious, lying on a mattress which was placed on a bed of rough boxes. Her husband was by her side, and he, who had looked on death in all its forms and so often, was weeping bitterly. There was not a dry eye amongst us, and every heart was almost as heavy as his own.

We made her coffin at once, and on the Monday morning I helped to carry her to her grave under the shadow of a great baobab tree. The district was infested with hyenas, and for seven nights volunteers amongst us kept guard in watches over the grave, burning a large fire. It was terrible in the solemnity of the African night to hear the different cries of the wild animals and the hateful howls of the hyenas, which came as near as they dared, and then ran back into the jungle on seeing the fire, rattling the long, dry grasses as they fled.

The Doctor, stricken with grief at the loss of the woman who had been his friend and companion in a land where both were scarce, was a long time before he recovered from the blow, and more than once I heard him say mournfully that he also would like to be left in Africa, where his wife was resting. His affliction was the greater because it was just about this time that the Bishop and the missionary perished.

"Poor Mary," he wrote, "lies on Shupanga brae, and becks forenent the sun." In these days she rests under a stone tomb, with a cross at the head, and the giant limbs of the baobab arching over it.

During the three years I was with the Doctor we had more adventures than I can remember.

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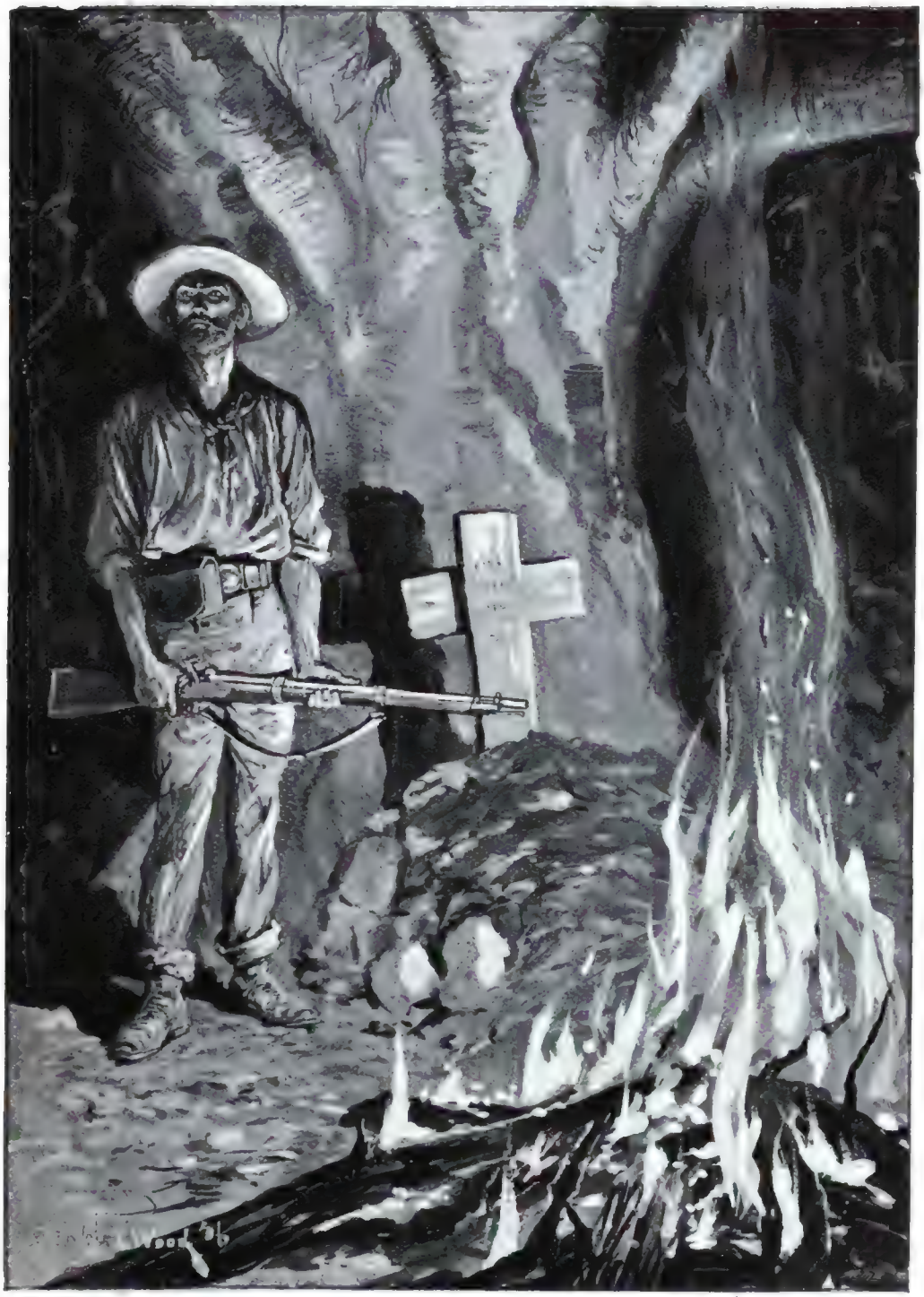

The district was infested with hyenas, and for seven nights volunteers amongst us kept guard in watches over the grave, burning a large fire.

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We were in a land which was then unknown to white men, but which has since become part of the British Empire, and through some parts of which a railway has actually been made—the Cape to Cairo route. Yet in those not very distant days we were constantly struggling through almost impenetrable forests, making our own pathways, constantly meeting all sorts of wild beasts, snakes, and vermin, as well as primitive naked savages.

Terrible were the sufferings we sometimes saw amongst these poor natives. Once we went through a famine-stricken district. Not a soul was left alive—the miserable little mud huts of the villages were crowded with corpses, the river up which we slowly steamed was so choked with them that our paddles ceased to revolve, and we had to clear away the obstruction. The very crocodiles were surfeited.

Yet it was not all gloom and misery. There were bright gleams in the darkness, just as there are clear patches in a cloudy sky. Once, I specially remember, the Doctor shot a large elephant. I thought I would like a trophy from the carcase, so I cut off the tail, and asked if I might keep it.

The Doctor laughed. "Certainly," he said. "You take the tail and I'll have the tusks. I can turn them into money!"

And he did so, the "money" being in the form of calico and so on, which he got from a Portuguese trader, to help on that missionary work which was the pride of his heart and the work of his life, and which was always hampered for want of funds. I have the tail here still—look at it. Just a bit of the dried hide, and a tuft like a broom. Much of it was eaten away by the mice, which used to swarm over our faces as we slept.

When you are in a strange, far-off land like that, living as best you can, on the queerest sorts of food, there are times when you crave for a homely dish, and once in particular the Doctor and his party wanted scones.

It was Sunday, and we had nothing left to eat but guinea-fowls. These, like other good things, are excellent for a change; but you get tired of sameness, and with guinea-fowl morning, noon, and night I used to heave at the very sight of one.

"Pennell," said the Doctor to me that Sunday morning, for I was acting cook, "I remember when I was passing through Gloucestershire that I had some very good scones. Now, you are a Gloucestershire man—do you think you can make some?"

"No, sir," I answered, "I don't know how to make scones; but I can tackle pancakes."

"Very well," said the Doctor, "we'll have some."

I set enthusiastically to work. I had a little flour left, and I sent into the nearest village for milk and eggs, which we got in exchange for our last towel. All our other things had been parted with owing to the Doctor's generosity in giving things away, and the thieves who were always present amongst our own servants.

I made some splendid pancakes. Great indeed was the tribute to my cooking—but I did not altogether appreciate it then, because before anybody quite knew what was happening all the pancakes were eaten, and the poor cook was left without a bite! I had passed through many a hard and disappointing moment—but that was one of the toughest! However, an old salt has his weather eye constantly open, and I had kept some of the eggs and flour back, foreseeing squalls. Although there had been many a laugh when it was found that I was left without my share, they were nothing like the roars when I set to work on my own frying! Many a time after that, by campfire and in gloomy forest, did the Doctor rally his cook on his pancakes, and ask him if he could not furnish another frying? And the cook usually could. I think a share was always left for him from that first demonstration onward.

There were, as I have said, many adventures through which we safely passed in Darkest Africa, but the greatest of all the perils I shared was not on land with the Doctor, but on the sea, to which I belonged. Famous as the Doctor now was as a traveller and explorer, great as was the missionary work he had done, yet he was recalled in 1863. He was badly wanting money, and to raise it he determined to sell the *Lady Nyassa*, a new steamer which had been built at home at his own cost—£6000—and sent out to Africa in sections. We had put her together there, and a fine little craft she was, but purely a river boat—not nearly so fine a sea-boat as the *Pioneer*. The *Pioneer*, as a Government vessel, had been taken back into the Navy, and the *Lady Nyassa* had been towed by a warship to Mozambique.

I now thought that I should say farewell to the expedition, and rejoin the Navy; but the Doctor had other objects in his mind. I was pretty well used by that time to startling suggestions, but I was not prepared for what the Doctor proposed, which was nothing less than to take our frail, shallow craft from

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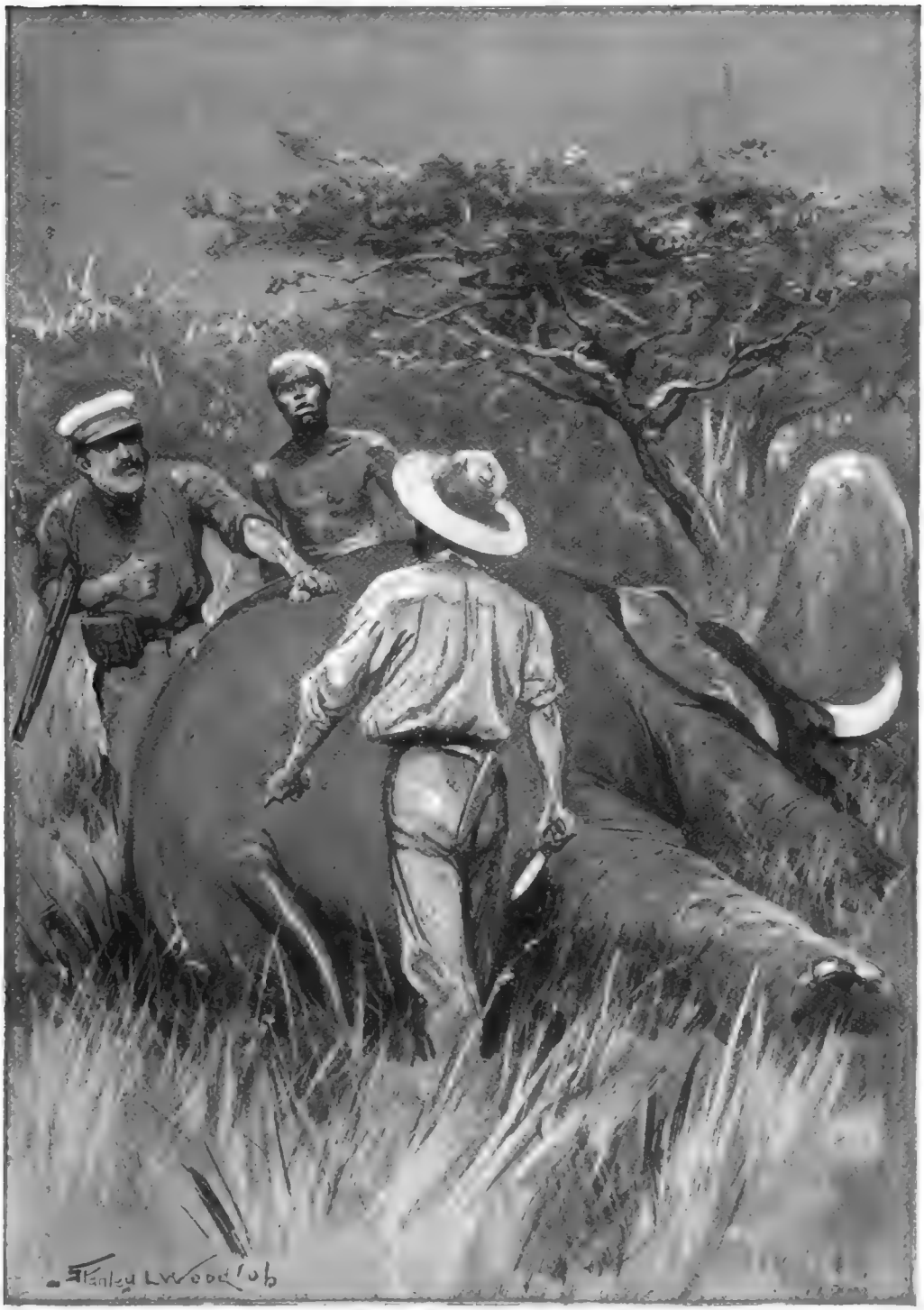

"You take the tail and I'll have the tusks."

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Mozambique to Zanzibar, about six hundred miles up the coast. Well, where the Doctor led I was not going to hesitate to follow; so I went with him, and was glad, indeed, when the risky trip was over. But nobody wanted to buy the *Nyassa* at Zanzibar, except the Arabs, and the Doctor would not part with her to them, knowing that they would turn her into a slaver. Undaunted by his failure, he determined on a voyage which was as daring as it seemed hopeless.

"Pennell," he said, "will you go with me in the *Nyassa* to Bombay?"

I was taken hopelessly aback. Go to Bombay, two thousand five hundred miles, across the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea, in a vessel much smaller than one of the London County Council's Thames steamers, and not nearly so powerful! I knew too much about the sea in those parts to relish the prospect—but again the Doctor was the leader—and I volunteered. Permission was given to me from the Navy, and after loading every inch of the hold and cabins and deck with stores and wood and fourteen tons of coal, we were ready for our dangerous voyage. There were only four white men—the Doctor, Mr. John Reid, who died lately at Govan, and was the carpenter; an able seaman from the Navy, named Collier, and myself. We had seven Zambesi blacks, and two boys, who had never been to sea before. The Doctor gave them ten shillings a month, and was to return them to Zanzibar. They were slaves that we had liberated from a Portuguese caravan.

The *Lady Nyassa* had neither masts nor sails, so we fitted her with a mast like an Arab dhow, and Collier made some sails. She was a very shallow boat, drawing about three feet, and had no bulwarks, only rails. Her screw drove her at the best at ten knots an hour; but we wanted to economise the fuel, knowing how precious it was.

In this frail craft we started in April, about Good Friday, expecting, according to the Doctor's reckoning, to reach Bombay in twenty days. In that region the north-east monsoon blows moderately from November to March; then from May to September the south-west monsoon prevails, blowing fiercely, with bad weather in June and July. We were reckoning on the south-west monsoon being with us, and it did, as a matter of fact, help us greatly. We had calm weather at times, and at other times very rough seas and furious winds.

One terrific squall struck us, and I never supposed that the *Lady Nyassa* would right herself. She was hurled over and beam-ended, and if the sail had not gone we should most surely have been lost. It was an awful and unnerving time. The poor blacks were paralysed with fear—can you wonder at it?—and hid themselves right for'ard in the darkest corners they could find. We had to get them out almost by force.

It was a wonderful voyage. Throughout all its hardships and dangers the Doctor never lost hope or courage. He was the only one amongst us who understood navigation, and Collier was the only man who could steer. It was a desperate undertaking for the two of them—the Doctor to do work which I had always seen shared in a man-of-war by four or five officers, and Collier to perform his own seaman's duties and try to teach the other three white men how to handle the wheel.

The Doctor, of course, picked it up quickly, but he could only steer in calm weather, because of his crippled arm. Mr. Reid also was a good pupil, and I managed to do pretty well. But the engine-room claimed most of my energies. As for poor Collier, he actually slept by the wheel, so that, if anything went wrong, we could rouse him with a kick. A fine, cheerful, uncomplaining fellow he was, a true British sailor, who never failed to answer readily this rather heartless signal.

What faith we had in our chief and guide! There he was, day after day, taking the sun, always cheering us, always looking ahead, always filling us with the sure hope that in the end we should reach our longed-for harbour. Even when the twenty days had passed, and we were nowhere near Bombay, we did not lose heart; our confidence was not shattered, although we ran short of water.

The Doctor! That was the secret of it all. The Doctor, and our blind, child-like faith in him as our guide and preserver! And sure enough, just when it seemed as if we should have to die of thirst the rain came. We caught it in our parched mouths, revelled in its deluge, and filled up all our tanks and vessels. All this time we were making our way across that lonely ocean, seeing never a sail except the dhows. There we ran a serious risk, for if the Arabs had known what we really were we should have been seized by them for the sake of the *Lady Nyassa*; but they took us for a dhow like themselves, and being too far off to tell that ours was really a steamboat, their curiosity was not too much roused.

At noon the Doctor would take the sun, making twelve o'clock, as the saying was, and at night he would take the stars. Many

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a wonderful talk I had with him under that bright Indian sky. The heavens seemed like an open book to him, and he read the stars as one reads print. Talk, I say—but it was mostly done by him, for I was too awed to do more than listen. During those long, slow days the Doctor used to say jokingly: "Shall I take my watch now? Yes, I think I will—because it's the dog watch"—which is only two hours, you know, while the ordinary watch is four. But often enough he would say: "Well, I shall probably do more harm than good, so I'll keep away."

The twenty days grew to thirty, and to the thirty we nearly added another ten. It seemed as if we should be like the *Flying Dutchman*, going about for ever, and never getting anywhere; then I knew from the Doctor's manner that something important was in the wind.

"How much coal and wood have you?" he said. "Do you think you've got enough to burn thirty-six hours?"

I told him I was sure we had not.

"Never mind," said the Doctor. "Get up steam, and go ahead. I think we shall sight the Bombay lightship to-morrow. Have you enough to last till then?"

I thought I had—it is amazing what you can do at such a time, and we were wild with excitement at the prospect of making the harbour, so I fired up with all the energy I could muster and all the fuel I could lay hands on.

The Doctor's prophecy was fulfilled. Early next morning he came joyfully up, and pointed to a dim little object right ahead, then gave me his glass to look through. "There," he said, "what do you make that out to be?"

I told him I didn't know—and I had not the least idea.

"That's the Bombay lightship, Pennell," he said; but, believe me, even then I had my doubts, because I thought it might just as well be a lightship on the other side of India. We passed the lightship unnoticed—so small was the *Lady Nyassa*—although they were specially watching for us, and we got into harbour early in the afternoon.

"How much fuel have you left?" asked the Doctor.

"About half-a-hundred, sir," I told him.

And that was the truth—there was only wood and coal enough to last half-an-hour. But what did that matter? We were safely anchored.

Only a few hours before I had doubted the Doctor's skill as a navigator. Now I would have gone to any part of the world under him as the captain—and in the *Lady Nyassa*, too But he sold her in Bombay for £2600.

A GAME OF CHANCE.

Dora's dark and fair to see,
Jovial and jolly;
But as gardener's daughter, she
Goes not in society;
So to wed her, that would be
Quite the height of folly.

Well, until her beauty fades,
She shall be my Queen of

Clara, now, is up-to-date,
Sings and plays and dances;
But I'd never care to mate
With a wedding fashion-plate.
And, besides, I've heard of late
Women's clubs she fancies.

Well, until her friend she snubs,
She shall be my Queen of

May has lots of coin bright,
And might be a winner:
But she's such an ugly sight
That if we should wed, I'm quite
Sure I'd lose my appetite
Watching her at dinner.

Still, she's **rich, however plain,**
Queen of **she shall reign.**

Lucy's of artistic bent,
And she's more than pretty;
But she hasn't got a cent—
So I couldn't pay the rent;
And it isn't my intent
To forsake the city.

No—but maid of charming parts,
She shall be my Queen of

ENVOY.

"What are you?" I hear you ask,
"Jack or deuce—remove you're mask!"
I've no suit, alas, alack!
I'm the joker of the pack.

M. P. Dunlap.

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The Story of a Japanese Soldier's Devotion to his Emperor.

By W. R. Calvert.

The whole valley was full of bloom and song. Nestling on the side of the hill stood a Japanese dwelling, the home of a little maid, who was sweet and pure as the petals that strewed the ground about her as she walked in the garden. Anon she rested and looked down at the scene below. Far away in front stretched the deep, blue ocean, but close to the shore lay the dark, sullen ships of war, with light, hazy smoke rising from their funnels. For the cables had hummed and told their tale: the Boxers had risen. So down in the bay the ships of the Mikado were making ready.

Suddenly the watcher utters a cry of surprise, for there, visible in a bend of the road, appears a native 'ricksha, and soon the "boy" stands before her, panting and exhausted. A sturdy little fellow, and well-known to the foreigners in Yokohama, Obama is the fleetest of all the 'ricksha boys. To-day, however, he stands hesitatingly before his sweetheart, till at length she cries out:

"Obama, what is it? Why don't you speak?"

"Oh, my beloved, I am summoned. My devotion——" and he stopped.

"Go on! What is the matter? The streets are full, and the swiftness of Obama is well known. What is your summons?"

"Beloved, our people are in danger, and the Mikado has called out his soldiers. My devotion is to my Emperor, and I go, though my heart is heavy—heavy for thee, oh my beloved."

His eyes flashed as he spoke of his Emperor. But the girl trembled and swooned.

At the sound of her cry an old woman came from the house.

"What is it, Obama?" she asked.

He told her.

"And when?"

"To-night." And he looked down upon the slender form now lying in her mother's arms with the glistening tears upon her cheek, and his heart was torn. "It is my devotion," he muttered.

Two hours later they parted, and the creaking of the 'ricksha and the patter of the sandals were borne up on the evening stillness to the sobbing girl. At the bend of the road she saw him, and high and shrill rang out her cry:

"Obama, Obama! Thy devotion!"

He stopped, and his hand was raised to the setting sun.

"For my Emperor and my beloved."

And the 'ricksha creaked down the hill.

Foremost in battle, strongest in difficulty, Obama was promoted, and a note of pride beat in the hearts of the lovers where only love had been before.

Encamped around the massive ramparts of Pekin, the allies strove to make a breach

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through which to enter, for to scale the walls was impossible. The general commanding the attacking force inspected gravely the effect of his splendid battery, and almost under his horse's hoofs lay Obama, a smile on his face as he saw a convulsed body topple from the wall each time he ejected a cartridge from the smoking breech of his rifle. Suddenly the general lowered his glasses.

"That gate must fall! I want a volunteer to blow it up."

Almost before the words were out of his mouth a score of men of all nationalities, who had noted the look, sprang to attention at his side, heedless of the flying bullets. The stern, lined face relaxed as the officer witnessed the eagerness with which his wish was fulfilled, and he rapidly scanned the men before him.

Of those that rushed forward was Obama, an eager look in his eyes and all his muscles quivering. "My devotion," he muttered, and his hand went up to the smoke-obscured sun.

The general observed the movement and noted the strong, sinewy, muscular limbs of the 'ricksha boy. He saw, too, with a soldier's eye, the corporal's stripes.

"You heard my order, corporal. Place the charge, light the fuse, and escape . . . if you can."

Obama saluted and turned to an engineer carrying the charge. But the general called him again.

He stopped and his hand was raised to the setting sun.

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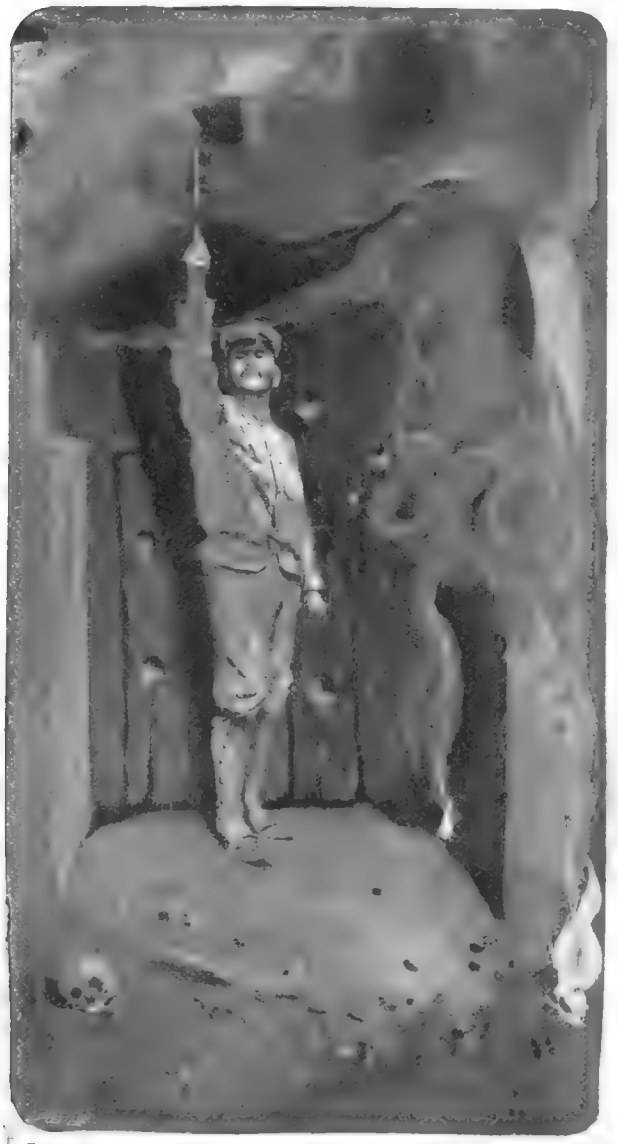

Drawing his bayonet, . . . and then raising it Heavenwards, Obama stood guard over the fizzling fuse.

"You can withdraw if you choose, corporal. It may be—nay, it is sure death. If you . . ."

The corporal saluted once more, and his hand was raised as he cried, thrilling his hearers so that they, too, saluted:

"It is my devotion to my Emperor and to my beloved."

And then he turned his gaze to the goal, and saw the bullet-strewn path down which he must go. But he never wavered, and set off immediately at his topmost speed.

"See the little devil run!" shrieked a stalwart Yankee. On and on across that hell sped the corporal, while those without strove to protect their champion by checking the force of the fire from the city wall. Never before had the 'ricksha boy run as he now ran, but his former service stood him in good stead.

"He's down! No, by Heaven, he's not! He'll do it. Ah-h!"

The general sat upon his horse with never a movement, but his breathing was thick and fast, and his eyes followed the speeding figure, and glanced at the distance still to be covered. All around splinters of stone were being raised by the whistling bullets, but the corporal sped on unharmed. The general's face relaxed when the over-hanging gateway was reached, and a smile played round his mouth at the cheering that broke out in all tongues and from all throats. The Boxers, in their wrath, fired and fired again, but, sheltered by the gateway, the corporal placed his charge, and, having recovered his breath somewhat, lit the fuse, and sprang away. Once again he passes through that hell of flame and lead, and safely arrives and stands to attention before his general.

And then, suddenly, almost before the salute of the corporal is made, a cry of rage takes the place of the cheering, and all eyes are turned once again toward the gateway. While the Allies stood awaiting the crash which would be the signal for their dash for the besieged city, a figure was seen quickly to open a small wicket gate in the massive structure, and boldly place its foot upon the spitting fuse. The general looked at the batteries and he looked at the wall, and, turning once more to the men around him, he cried:

"The gate must fall! Who will go?"

Before the words were out of his mouth Obama had attached his bayonet to his belt, and was once more saluting his general.

Again the awful race was run, and the flashes from the wall redoubled, and then the speed of the runner decreased, and at last he fell. But the gate was almost reached, and his

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friends were firing well and truly at the marksmen on the wall, and slowly and painfully he crawled to the half-burnt fuse. Then the watchers remembered that he could not escape if he lit the fuse, and they wondered whether he would fail. Surely he was not going to try to return, wounded as he evidently was? And yet, what else could he do? Drawing his bayonet, and waving it in salute towards his general, and then raising it Heavenwards, Obama stood guard over the fizzling fuse, for he was now proving his devotion to his Emperor—and his beloved.

The wicket-gate was once more opened, but it was never shut, for the watchers saw the bayonet dart forth and heard a scream, followed by a roar as of thunder and the rending of timbers. The gate was down, and over the spot where Obama—Corporal Obama—had mounted guard and proved his devotion, the cheering troops dashed in to relieve the Legations.

* * * * *

The blossoms had fallen on the little hillside of Yokohama, and the summer, too, had passed when the maid was startled, as she stood looking seawards one morning, by the sound of a galloping horse. Round the bend in the road where she had last seen her sweetheart, she perceived a cavalry officer dashing up the hill towards the house. Her heart beat rapidly as he stopped before the gate and saluted.

"The *fiancée* of Obama?"

She bowed.

He gave her the paper and looked curiously at her while she broke the seal.

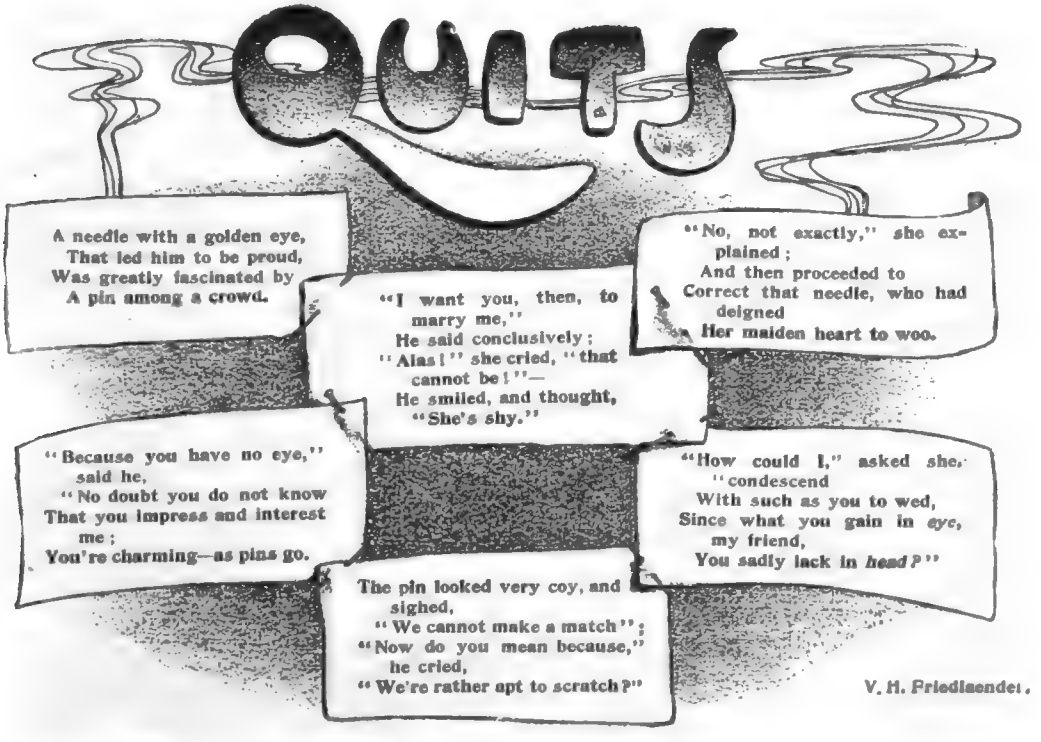
"He is badly wounded?" she asked piteously, after scanning the contents.

"He still lives," was the reply.

She went down to the vessel where he lay in a darkened cabin. He told her of his devotion to the Emperor and to her, his beloved, and when the sun rose next morning, Captain Obama saluted yet once again, and went to meet the Great General who commands the armies of the world.

* * * * *

And the maid went forth to the garden, where she still waits for the return of Obama, the 'ricksha boy, who has gone, she says, to prove his devotion to the Emperor and to her, his beloved.


QUITS
A needle with a golden eye,
That led him to be proud,
Was greatly fascinated by
A pin among a crowd.
"I want you, then, to marry me,"
He said conclusively;
"Alas!" she cried, "that cannot be!"—
He smiled, and thought,
"She's shy."
"No, not exactly," she explained;
And then proceeded to
Correct that needle, who had deigned
Her maiden heart to woo.
"Because you have no eye," said he,
"No doubt you do not know
That you impress and interest me;
You're charming—as pins go.
"How could I," asked she, "condescend
With such as you to wed,
Since what you gain in *eye*, my friend,
You sadly lack in *head*?"
The pin looked very coy, and sighed,
"We cannot make a match";
"Now do you mean because," he cried,
"We're rather apt to scratch?"
V. H. Friedlaender.

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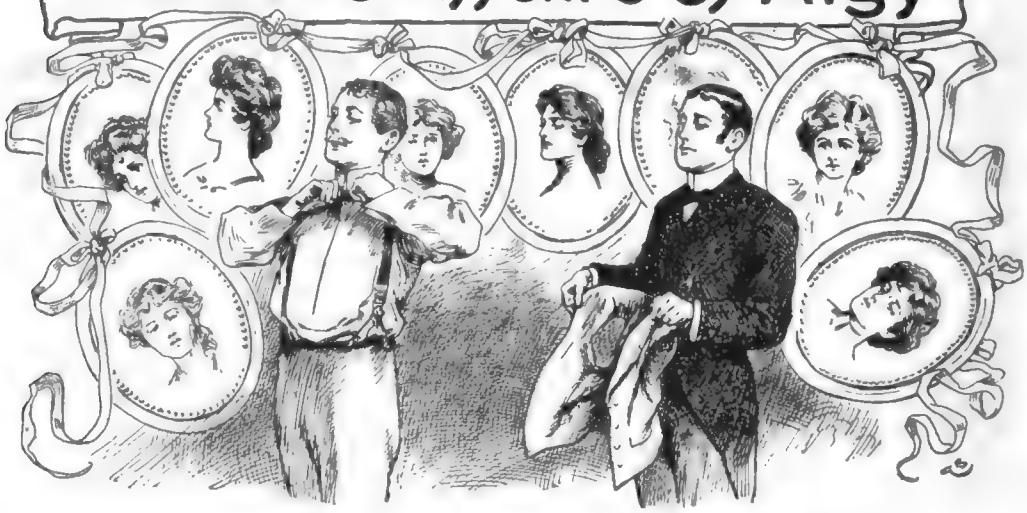
The Love Affairs Of Algy



The Fifth of a Series of Stories, Each Complete in Itself, Describing the Indiscreet Flirtations of the Hon. Algernon Marmaduke Brightlingsea.

V.—HIS NOVEMBER GIRL, OR, A WINTER'S TALE OF INDISCRETION.

By Marcus Woodward.

The Hon. Algernon Brightlingsea was bored to a degree verging on distraction.

Fate and his motor-car between them so had arranged matters that he found himself, one November night, stranded in a Brighton hotel, without companion or occupation, and with no visible chance of securing the one or the other.

Over his solitary dinner he had drawn unsubstantial amusement in watching the play of the eyebrows of a girl at a distant table—eyebrows, he decided, which deserved an ode, or perhaps a romantic ballad, in which they would draw from afar a gallant knight—represented by himself—to the rescue of their owner from the clutches of a fearsome dragon—represented by an elderly spinster, who appeared to be the enchanter's chaperon. But he had found no way to evade the dragon, who, before his dinner was half finished, had swept off her charge beneath his eyes—leaving him thereby, as we found him, in the depths of boredom.

Dejection sat heavily on the lonely Algy as he smoked his after-dinner cigarette in the hotel hall. In vain he scanned the *Brighton Visitors' Gazette* in the hope of finding a familiar name; in vain he examined the pages of the hotel register. "There's not a soul in Brighton," he sorrowfully concluded, "whom I appear to know."

He endeavoured to arouse an interest in the newest arrivals. A young man of somewhat distinguished appearance chanced to set up a bundle of golf-sticks against a chair at Algy's side. His good looks aroused enough curiosity in Algy's mind to cause him to turn the label attached to the case, and to read the name inscribed thereon—"George F. P. de Bourne." On the approach of the owner of the bag, Algy instantly regretted the indiscretion; and, on a sudden resolve, calling for hat and coat, went forth through the hotel doors for a stroll on the sea-front.

Lounging aimlessly along the pavement—the sea breeze reviving his fallen spirits every moment—Algy came to where a strip of red carpet beneath an awning testified to revelries going forward in a big house facing the sea. A cab drew up before the door, and he stood a moment to allow its occupants to pass in. Then, across the red carpet, there tripped none other than his lady of the eyebrows, closely followed by her faithful guardian.

"By George! she *is* a dream," said Algy

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to himself, not referring to the guardian. "Going to a dance, I suppose, and in five minutes some fellow will be waltzing with her!"

Algy longed to be in the lucky fellow's shoes. He reflected that he was quite prepared for dancing. On dressing for dinner, he had slipped his feet for comfort into dancing pumps, which he had not troubled to change; moreover, a pocket of his evening cloak contained, he remembered bitterly, a new pair of white gloves. The irony of the situation was not to be endured. Springing up the brightly-lighted steps, Algy passed through the open doors in the very shadow of the chaperon's wings.

* * * *

Thus it came about that the Hon. Algernon Brightlingsea became a distinguished, though uninvited ornament to the select dance to which Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Salmon had bidden their friends in Brighton. The crush was great, and Algy had no difficulty in avoiding attention from a footman announcing names. His unknown hostess gave him her hand with a hasty "How do?" as she turned with gushing greeting to two ladies who followed after him, proclaimed as "Miss Burnside and Miss Pinchbody."

Algy, lingering to fasten a refractory glove-button, strained his ears to overhear what passed. Miss Burnside, to the hostess, was "darling Maggie." Miss Pinchbody, though warmly welcomed, appeared to be of no importance. The two guests, it seemed, had driven in from the country, a matter of fifteen miles, to attend the dance. Scraps of conversation floated to Algy. "Yes . . they had dressed and dined at the hotel, as arranged . . yes, it had been very comfortable. . . Well, now they must enjoy themselves—Maggie would find her Uncle Nathan in the ball-room . . dear Miss Pinchbody must seek a comfortable chair, and must be *sure* to have a good supper.'

The two ladies passed on into the ball-room, and five minutes later Algy saw the chance for which he had been waiting since first he had taken note of the expressive eyebrows of Maggie Burnside.

Making, as it were, a sudden spring to her side, a sudden dash for her hand—"Why, Miss Burnside!" he cried in enthusiasm—"How delighted I am to see you again at last!"

The dark, finely-arched eyebrows of Miss Burnside formed themselves into a distinct note of interrogation.

"By George! she is a dream," said Algy.

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"D-d-delighted!" repeated Algy, warmly shaking the captured hand. "D-d-delighted! D-d-delighted!"

His stutter would have betrayed to those who knew that he was quaking in his shoes, though outwardly bold as brass; it appeared quite natural to Maggie Burnside, a complete stranger, as she surveyed the very elegant figure bowing before her, noted the eye-glass, the perfectly divided hair, the small chin—and the dandyism that plain men dubbed foppishness.

"Surely you are mistaken," she said. "I don't know you from Adam!"

"I could never forget you—n-n-never!" declared Algy.

"And I'm sure I should remember you if I had seen you before." Maggie smiled upon him, not unkindly—he was amusing! "Can you say when we met?"

Algy drew a bow at a venture, reading encouragement in her deep eyes.

"It was t-t-twelve weeks ago," he hazarded. "Pre-pre-precisely. Have I not counted the minutes?"

"Twelve weeks ago?" The eyebrows ascended to greater heights than before. "Where might I have been twelve weeks ago?"

At Jericho—or Timbuctoo—for all Algy knew; where he had been he could not have said for the life of him. But he drew his bow again at a venture.

"C-C-Cowes!"

The bow was drawn with an effort, it is true, but with an air of triumph—and the arrow flew true to the mark.

"So I was. Then it must have been on board the *Belladonna* that you saw me. But surely we were not introduced?"

"No," said Algy truthfully—adding unblushingly—"I have regretted it ever since."

A motion of her hand gave him permission to seat himself beside her.

"And ever since that time on the—er—*Belladonna*," Algy went on, "I have sought you, Miss Burnside, high and low. At last I learnt that you were connected with the Salmons, and I came here simply on the chance of speaking to you."

Algy stopped, abashed at his own boldness, quailing before the steady look that came from beneath the slightly-raised eyebrows. For ten, perhaps fifteen, seconds, the steady, thoughtful look endured; then it gave way to a look of amusement; finally, to a look of resolve.

"I'm very glad you came," said Maggie Burnside. "If you have sought high and low for me, I, for my part, have sought far and wide for you. I am delighted to meet you at last—for though you may have forgotten, I can never, never forget what you did for me that day at Cowes."

As she thus spoke, smiling in the kindliest way, Algy's mouth opened wider and wider in vacuous astonishment, and his eyebrows, in turn, were elevated to such a height that his eye-glass fell out with a clatter.

"You — you — as-as-astonish me," he stammered, but she went on, stooping forward to touch his fallen eye-glass.

"It was *this* that told me who you were. It is quite useless for you to pretend to be innocently astonished. For months I have been steadily on the look-out for a young man with an eye-glass—name unknown—who had seen me in the distance for ten minutes on board the *Belladonna* at Cowes. Now I *have* found him, he must be thanked as he deserves. Only I fear I can *never* thank him properly for saving Peep-O's life."

"P-P-Peep-O?" Algy was completely bewildered.

"Yes, Peep-O," echoed his partner. "Let me refresh your memory. Three months ago, at Cowes, my aunt gave a tea-party on my uncle's yacht, the *Belladonna*. Among the many boat-loads of callers was one of which you were a member. I did not see you myself; you did not stay ten minutes, and afterwards no one could remember with whose party you had come, or who you were. Naturally, we tried our best to find you when we learnt that it was the young man in the eye-glass who had saved Peep-O's life."

Algy was dumb with astonishment. True, he had been to Cowes; but never, so far as he knew, had he saved the life of Peep-O or anyone else. But great caution, he decided, was needed in making any disclaimer, lest the utter falsity of his position should come to light. He asked stammeringly: "P-p-pray—who is P-P-Peep-O?"

"It is quite useless," said Miss Burnside, "for you to pretend this guileless innocence. You know as well as I do that Peep-O is my poodle. You know that you saved her life when she fell overboard, and sent her back to me by another hand, doubtless because you were too wet to come yourself. It *must* have been you. We know for certain that it was a man with an eye-glass who had been aboard the *Belladonna* for ten minutes. You say you were on board the *Belladonna*. You wear an eye-glass. Therefore, it *was* you—and I'm charmed to have the chance to express my thanks to Peep-O's saviour."

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"*Peep-O's saviour!*" Algy was too astounded at having this title thrust upon him to make adequate protest. He attempted to say he had no right to it—stammered helplessly—and ended up by muttering: "It was nothing—n-n-nothing—any fellow would have done it." Then he thought it wise to change the subject with what speed he might.

"Pray, don't speak of it again," he intreated. "I would willingly give my life for far less than Peep-O to please you. By the way," he added, "I trust you are not engaged for every dance?"

"I can't say," said Miss Burnside. "My uncle introduced me to a dozen men, but where or who they are, I know not—and there are no programmes to bind one."

Good, said Algy, and prayed (not without trouble with his "p's") that he might be regarded as a perpetual partner. Would the chaperon, Miss Pinchbody, be shocked? Miss Burnside thought not.

"Her disapproval of my actions, however erratic," she explained, "fades as supper-time approaches, and dies completely afterwards. Shall we have this waltz?"

Thus it was that the ice was broken—thus that Algy plunged to his neck in unknown waters.

They danced, and Algy's waltzing won approval. For his part, he had completely succumbed to the attractions of Maggie Burnside. He exerted all his efforts to entertain her—to keep her thoughts from Cowes, and Peep-O the poodle. But when they were toying with ices in the conservatory after the waltz, Peep-O, in spite of all his efforts, came, as it were, again to the surface.

"I should like you to see Peep-O," Miss Burnside remarked, "so that she might thank you herself for saving her life."

Algy saw in a flash that Peep-O might yet serve him another useful turn.

"May I call?" he asked. "I should love to see dear little Peep-O again. Do you live in Brighton?"

"Unfortunately, no. We live in the country, fifteen miles from Brighton. We drove in to-night for the dance, and return to-morrow by train."

"I beg you," said Algy, "to allow me to drive you home in my motor."

"Oh, thank you," said Miss Burnside, "but really I could not think of allowing it."

But Algy pressed for permission, spoke of his longing to see Peep-O—claimed the seeing of Peep-O almost as a right—and finally succeeded in gaining a half-promise that the return journey on the morrow should be made in the car—provided the chaperon could be persuaded to assent to such an irregularity.

Time passed swiftly. They danced, and sat out dances in various conservatories and retreats, they found mutual friends to discuss, and the delight at least of one of them in the other's society grew with every passing moment. Partners to whom Miss Burnside had been introduced now and again appeared, hovered uneasily in the neighbourhood, and departed—finding no encouragement in her looks. When Algy spoke of the greatness of the honour she did him, she replied: "You saved Peep-O's life, you know, and I can never show my gratitude enough"—and it was this remark that brought about Algy's downfall.

"Miss B-B-Burnside," he made trembling reply—they were sitting now in the most secluded corner they had yet discovered—"Miss B-B-Burnside, I cannot live another moment without telling you—telling you ——"

"What?" said Miss Burnside encouragingly.

"Er—aw," stammered Algy—then with a rush of words: "Telling-you-that-I-have-loved-you-to-desperation-from the-moment-I-first-set-eyes-upon-you-on-the-*Belladonna*-at-Cowes."

Miss Burnside rose in a stately way to her feet, and withered Algy with a cold, regretful look.

"I'm sorry you said that," she said. "I had hoped better of you. I didn't think the man who had saved my Peep-O would give way to foolishness like this. At least, I thought he would be a man to whom one might talk in a friendly way for a few minutes without having to pay for it by a proposal. Please take me at once to Miss Pinchbody."

But Algy's penitence was so keen—and went to such sublimely ridiculous lengths—even to imploring for forgiveness on bended knee—that his partner's heart relented. "I will give you one more chance to be good," she said, "on condition that you get up at once." And Algy rose with alacrity, new hope in his heart.

The hope was short-lived.

"Why," said Miss Burnside, half to herself, in a ruminating way, "this *is* absurd. I don't even know your name."

Over Algy came a spasm of terror. This was an evening of indiscretion—serious trouble might yet arise. Disgrace stared him in the face. But it flashed upon him that

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until he found himself in smoother waters his real name were best withheld.

"What *is* your name?"

The sudden question, fired at him point-blank, took deadly effect. Thrown into utter confusion, he hesitated for an answer, and was lost.

He uttered the first name other than his own that entered his head.

"My name," he said, "is—er—B-B-Bourne."

His great fear was that he would be found out as an uninvited guest; and he had no wish to disgrace himself or his family. "Bourne," he repeated. "George F. B. de Bourne"; and reflected that the name of a chance visitor to a Brighton hotel would probably convey nothing to his listener.

But in this Algy was mistaken—as he saw directly he had the courage to raise his eyes and look Miss Burnside in the face. She was gazing at him in mingled astonishment, anger, and incredulity. Suddenly she levelled an accusing finger.

"You are not speaking the truth," she said coldly. "I fear I have been much mistaken in you."

"F-f-forgive me," he stuttered. "L-let me confess everything."

She stood before him, cold and stern.

"Go on," she said, "confess everything. Who are you?"

Algy felt that his tangled web of deceit left no escape save in confession.

"B-B-Brightlingsea," stammered Algy shamefacedly. "Algernon Brightlingsea, not George de Bourne." He hung his head as he admitted he had come uninvited to the dance, and, as he went on to plead forgiveness, he showed imminent signs of descending again to his knees. There were now groups of dancers in view, and Maggie Burnside had no desire to attract attention.

"Tell me," she said hastily, cutting short Algy's stammering pleas for forgiveness and attempts at confession of his many indiscretions that evening, "tell me at once what you know of Mr. Robert de Bourne."

"N-n-nothing," confessed Algy. "Only that he would seem to have spent his afternoon golfing—that he is deucedly good-looking—and that he is staying at my hotel. Now," he implored again, "grant me your absolution."

"On one condition."

"Yes?"

"That you bring Mr. Robert de Bourne to me immediately."

Algy's face fell.

"No, hang it all," he began—but she would not listen.

"You must bring him to me at once."

"I beg——"

"I command."

Algy saw that resistance was useless.

"You will forgive me everything if I go?"

"Not only that—I will reward you if you return successfully."

Algy rose eagerly to the bait.

"How?" he inquired.

"Go—and return—and you shall see. Otherwise," added Miss Burnside, with a smile, "very probably I shall expose you. Take me to Miss Pinchbody, and go. One moment. Use any arguments you please to persuade Mr. de Bourne to come, but on no account mention my name. He won't come if you do. You understand? Now hurry—hurry!"

And Algy—fuming in his heart at the turn events had taken, hating the idea of seeking and bringing in a possible rival, yet eagerly anticipating his reward—went.

* * * * *

Robert de Bourne lay stretched at his ease before the hall fire in his hotel—a big, athletic-looking man, with the face of a somewhat thickened Apollo, clad in a rough golfing suit. He was dreaming of fabulous drives, and exclaiming now and again in his sleep at the glory of them. To him approached the Hon. Algernon Brightlingsea, not without hesitation.

"Ahem!"

No response from the snoring golfer.

"Ahem!" said Algy again. The grunt that greeted his efforts was not encouraging, but Algy said "Ahem!" yet again, and ventured to press on the gigantic toes of the dormant athlete. This caused two heavy eyelids slowly to open.

"Excuse me, sir," said Algy, "I beg your pardon—fact is, don't you know you are wanted, sir, m-m-most immediate—*m-m-most* important."

Into the dreams of Robert de Bourne came a vision of a stuttering caddie boy, babbling an incoherent message.

"Go away," he growled, and closed his eyes.

"*Most* important," said Algy loudly. He trod, this time heavily, on the golfer's foot; he kicked his chair with force. "Wake up, sir, wake up."

De Bourne awoke to see an immaculate figure in evening dress, hovering in anxious trepidation before him.

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"Hullo!" he exclaimed. "What's up?"

"R-R-Robert de B-B-Bourne——"

"That's my name—are you going to arrest me—or what?"

"Since that is your name," said Algy, "you must come with me at once—at once!" he repeated imperiously, as Robert de Bourne showed signs of falling asleep again.

"If you are trying to arrest me, I tell you I am not the man you want. Where do you come from?"

"From the Salmons' dance," said Algy, "where your presence is immediately required."

At this de Bourne rubbed his eyes and sat up.

"The Salmons' dance!" he exclaimed. "And who may the Salmons be?"

"F-f-friends of mine," stuttered Algy, in nervous haste. "L-l-listen. L-l-let me explain. They are giving a dance in their house on the front. I was invited—at least—er—I went. And there I met a girl—a lovely creature—M-M-Miss—I can't tell you her name, but her eyebrows are divine, and she knows you, and insists on seeing you at once—*m-m-most* important—*m-m-most* immediate."

De Bourne, for answer, threw himself back in his chair, and laughed loud and long.

"Well, of all the cock-and-bull stories I've ever heard, this is the bulliest." He rose suddenly from his chair. "I'm going to bed," he said shortly. "Good-night." Swinging on his heel, leaving Algy speechless and aghast, he strode towards the lift.

But before the iron door clanged upon him, Algy was in hot pursuit.

"Stop," he cried to the liftman, "I'm coming, too," and squeezed through the door. "I assure you, sir"—to de Bourne, as the lift sped aloft—"this is no j-j-joking matter. The l-l-lady is in d-d-dead earnest. You must c-c-come—positively *must!* For all I know," added Algy, in a last, despairing effort, "it may be a matter of life or death."

On stoical de Bourne this inspiration seemed to have little effect, but Algy's earnestness was so unmistakable that, on the stopping of the lift, he received an invitation from the golfer to accompany him to his room.

"You can talk to me if you like while I get into bed," said de Bourne, who appeared to be a man of few words.

The clock on the mantelpiece in de Bourne's room gave the time as midnight. A chair, a cigar, and a tray with decanters, syphons, and glasses were offered Algy in succession, and he gladly availed himself of them, in an attempt to pull himself together, and renew the unequal fight with better success. De Bourne shed his Norfolk jacket, and sat to unlace his boots.

"Now," he said, "drive away."

And Algy, more at his ease, drove away at such speed as the little impediment of his speech would allow.

"*My dear sir, I tell you she is the loveliest girl you ever saw.*"

This was the burden of his plea as he sang the charms of his late partner. He described her in general, in ecstatic tones; he described her in particular with a wealth of detail which proved him a shrewd observer. But to all outward appearances Robert de Bourne remained unmoved. He spoke little, and seemed to hear little. To the general description he remarked: "All girls are alike to me, and I abjure the entire sex." To the particular description of her hair, eyes, eyebrows, mouth, chin, hands, feet, etc., etc., he responded only by deep grunts—possibly accentuated by his efforts to unfasten a refractory bootlace knot. Nevertheless, when at last the bootlace was loosened, and Algy had come to an end of his rhapsody, de Bourne showed that his words had not been entirely without their effect.

"I conclude," he said, "you know this lady's name, but have been forbidden to tell me?"

"Yes," admitted Algy.

De Bourne reflectively kicked off one boot with the toe of the other.

"Her eyebrows, you say, are divine?"

Algy launched into a pæan of praise.

De Bourne thenceforward asked no further questions, and in the end it was for a dress suit, not for a sleeping suit, that his golfing clothes were exchanged.

* * * * *

"Miss B-B-Burnside — Mr. de B-B-Bourne."

Algy bowed low, and wondered what would happen next—a thought, as it chanced, which was uppermost in the minds of three other people, Miss Pinchbody (the estimable chaperon), Miss Burnside, and Mr. de Bourne. Thus far the present excitements of this wonderful evening had kept Algy from any serious thought of the future. Let him but bring de Bourne and his partner together and he would be rewarded—this had been the one clear idea in his mind while he had been gone on the quest of the man whose name he had taken in vain. Now that he had succeeded, he wondered, in the moment of dead silence that

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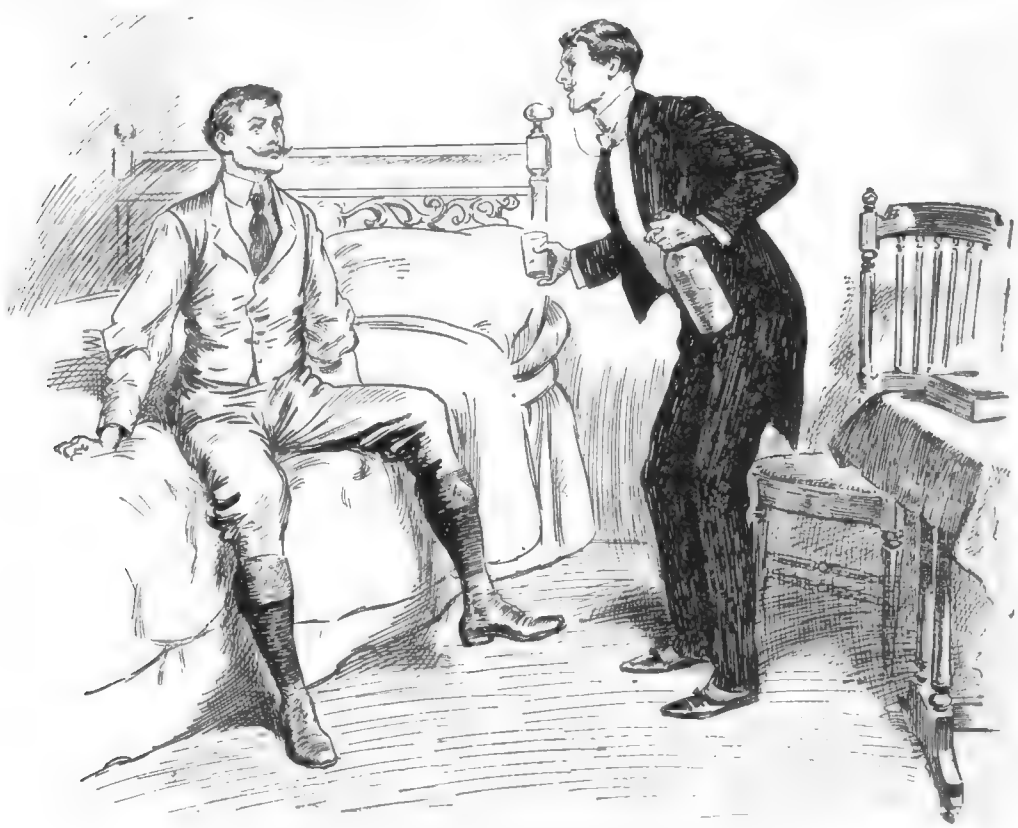
followed his introduction, what the outcome would be and what he should do. Maggie Burnside took the situation into her pretty, capable hands.

"Mr. Brightlingsea," she said, "my Uncle Nathan is most anxious to speak with you. I have told him all about the funny mistake you made in coming here, and he was quite delighted you had made it. It appears he knew your father very well years ago—and I promised to send you to him in the salon directly you returned. Miss Pinchbody"—



"My dear sir, I tell you she is the loveliest girl you ever saw."

turning to the chaperon, as Algy ruefully departed with his marching orders—"are you quite happy in remaining here? Then"—to the big, silent man beside her—"then—Robert—come."

* * * * *

Half-an-hour later Algy, having made the acquaintance of Mr. Nathan Salmon, and received a free absolution for his trespass, together with an invitation to make further acquaintance with the Salmon family as opportunity might offer, chanced to be wandering disconsolately through the series of little rooms abutting on the ball-room, when, from a half-hidden alcove in a wall, a merry cry pursued him:

"Hail! Mediator!"

It was the voice of his late partner—and next moment a giant's hand caught him by the shoulder, nearly swinging him off his feet, and Robert de Bourne was shaking him with prodigious vigour by the hand. Then Maggie Burnside took his other hand, saying: "We can never thank you enough for your mediation"; and they drew him between them — he protesting feebly and stuttering incoherent words of surprise and pleasure—into the haven in the wall.

Then they all fell to playing a game of confessions.

The confession of Robert de Bourne was that five years ago that night he had behaved with shameful hastiness in the matter of a small misunderstanding with one, Maggie Burnside, whom he had never seen in the interval, and had never expected to see again, he having gone from her in high dudgeon, leaving

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no address. Furthermore, he confessed that when the Hon. Algernon Brightlingsea had come for him in his hotel he, being sleepy, had mistaken Algy first for a golf caddie, next for a policeman in disguise.

The confession of Maggie Burnside was that she, too, had behaved with shameful hastiness in the matter of a small misunderstanding with one, Robert de Bourne—a misunderstanding hardly worth mentioning, now that they had made friends again, and were really and truly engaged. Furthermore, she confessed that she had behaved, she feared, with unmaidenly forwardness in meeting the advances of one, the Hon. Algernon Brightlingsea.

The Hon. Algernon Brightlingsea thereupon made confession that he had acted too many grievous deceits that night to be recounted, chiefly in that he had claimed acquaintance with one, Maggie Burnside, whom he had never before seen. Furthermore, he confessed specifically to taking false credit to himself in the matter of saving the life of a poodle, one Peep-O.

On which confession Miss Maggie Burnside still further confessed that though at first she had imagined the Hon. Algernon Brightlingsea *might* have been Peep-O's saviour (he certainly having taken the form of a young man with an eye-glass, name unknown), yet she had not long clung to this opinion. She proceeded to intimate that if it had not been for this mistaken idea certainly she would not have met Mr. Brightlingsea's advances as she had done.

"You see," said Maggie to de Bourne, "I was afraid this was going to be a deadly dull dance, and when I saw that Mr. Brightlingsea wanted to have some fun out of it, and when I had such a splendid excuse for making friends with him, I thought it would be amusing to play up to him. And it *has* been amusing"—turning to Algy—"hasn't it?"

Algy declared he had never spent a more exhilarating evening.

"Or a more useful one, I'll wager," said de Bourne, laying his great hand on Algy's arm.

"I'm sure," said Maggie, "the Recording Angel will wipe away all the fibs you told for the sake of the good which has come from them."

"I hope so," said Algy; adding, somewhat nervously, his stammer suddenly returning: "M-m-meantime, w-w-what about my earthly r-r-reward?"

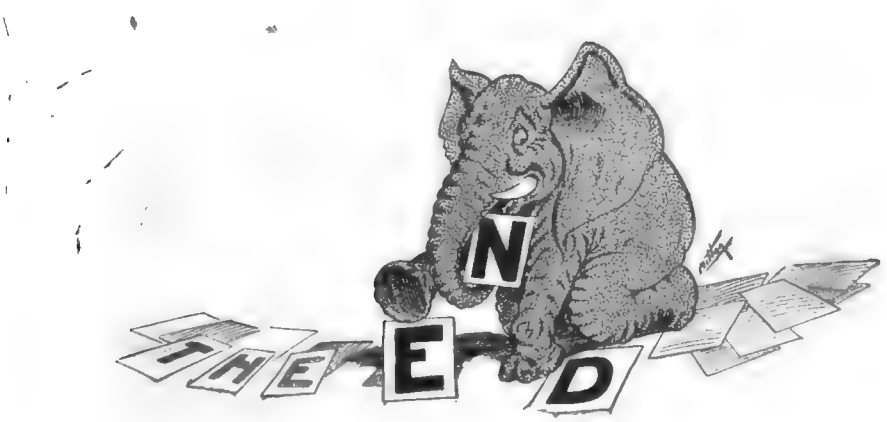
"Robert," said Maggie, at this reminder, "please go away."

And Algy got his reward.

* * * * *

He vowed next day, when he was still further rewarded by the privilege of driving Miss Burnside in his motor-car from Brighton to her home in the country—she sitting, radiant, beside him on the front seat, Robert de Bourne sitting humbly enough on the back seat, squeezed between Miss Pinchbody and a chauffeur—he vowed that the next best thing to becoming engaged to a pretty girl was to be the active agent in bringing about her engagement to somebody else.

So Algy lives to love another day.



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CAP AND BELLS

JOHNNY WAS WISE.

"You should be more careful of your toys, Johnny," said a mother to her small son. "Look at Willie Brown; he seldom breaks any of his."

"Yes," replied the wise youngster; "and that's why he don't get half as many new ones as I do."

* * * *

GIVE IT UP.

SHE: "You are a conundrum!"

HE: "Indeed!"

SHE: "Yes; and I'm going to give you up."

* * * *

USED TO IT.

"Please, sir, just a penny?" pleaded the thinly-clad beggar.

"I have nothing for you!" blurted the pompous man in the £25 overcoat.

"Surely you wouldn't turn a person away such a night as this?"

"Wouldn't I? Why, man, I am a theatrical manager. I turn away hundreds of people every night."

* * * *

DIDN'T TRUST HIM.

"Why did Fanny throw over Mr Whitechoker? He seems such a good young man."

"That's what she objected to. She said he seemed too good to be true."

* * * *

HARD LINES.

MABEL: "That's what I get for giving my maid my cast-off Worth gowns."

CONSTANCE: "What's happened?"

MABEL (bursting into tears): "That rich old Moneybags caught her in a dark corner and proposed to her, and she accepted him."

ONLY NATURAL.

"How the trees groan!" exclaimed the romantic maid as the wind swept through the orchard.

"No wonder," chimed in the practical youth, "they're full of green apples, you know."

* * * * *

ACCORDING TO RULES.

"Why did Parker appear on the golf links with his coachman this morning? Want him for a caddie?"

"No. Someone told him the rules required him to start off with a driver."

* * * *

HAVING HIS REVENGE.

A man with a painful expression of countenance sat on a public seat.

"Are you ill?" someone asked.

"No."

"Have you lost anything?"

"Never had anything to lose."

"What's the matter, then?"

"I'm sitting on a wasp."

"Why don't you get up?"

"That was my first impulse, but I began to think that I was hurting the wasp as badly as he was hurting me, and I concluded to sit here awhile."

Affable Barber: "Hair cut, sir?"
Grumpy Customer (sarcastically): "No, I want it made into a bun and tied with a pink ribbon."

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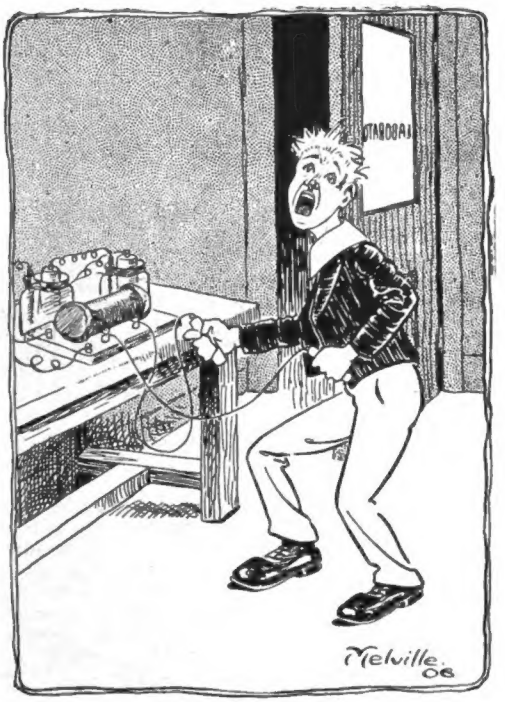


A "shocking" affair.

A READY LISTENER.

"Miss Willing," began the young man, as he wiped the cold perspiration from his brow, "are you fond of stories?"

"If they are new, Mr. Woodby," replied the fair maid, "I simply dote on them."

"But the one I was going to tell you, Miss Willing, is not new," said the young man. "It is, I might say, Miss Willing—er—Clara—the old, old story, but——"

"Oh, never mind, George," she interrupted, "even if it is a chestnut, I'm sure I never heard it. Go on, please!"

* * * * *

A REPREHENSIBLE PURSUIT.

With autograph-collecting folks
I do not sympathise at all.
It is a hobby which provokes
My tongue to utter words of gall;

For I myself am pestered thus.
I'm not an actor, be it told;
Admiring crowds do not discuss
My deeds, nor are my portraits sold.

My signature is wanted, though:
Appealing notes my table deck
From creditors who tell me *so*. . . . .
They'd like it written *on a cheque!*

L.

* * * * *

UNSATISFACTORY FOR HER.

SHE: "Did you ever kiss a girl when she wasn't looking?"

HE: "Yes; but only once. She made me do it over again when she was looking."

EARLY PROMISE.

"Yes, when Willie grows up, we intend to get him a commission in the Army."

"Which branch of the service?"

"Eh?"

"Which branch of the service—infantry?"

"No, cavalry, I think. He looks just beautiful on his rocking-horse."

* * * * *

HER ANSWER.

"Young Banks proposed to me last night."
"You can't mean that?" "Indeed it's true;
Asked me to be his wife outright."
"Good gracious, dear, what did you do?"

"Poor boy! He looked so handsome, Nell."
"Handsome! A clerk on weekly pay
Ask you—a beauty, and a belle!
But tell me what he dared to say."

"Well—first: he loved me." "Oh, that part,
Of course! What else?" "And then he thought
I was the sort of girl whose heart
Would never let itself be *bought*.

"He said he was a man—that I
Was just a woman; equal so
In youth, health, brain we stood, and—why,
You'd think he never dreamt of no—

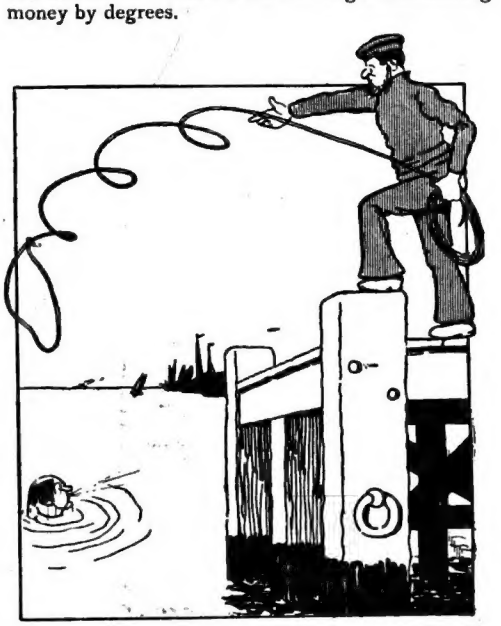
"That he was poor need be no bar"—
"Well, what an attitude to take!"—
"For Love would prove the guiding star
To fame and fortune for my sake.

"And then he begged my heart and hand."
"Such impudence! Who'd ever guess?
I hope you made him understand
His place?" "I did—I told him 'Yes'!"

* * * * *

BY DEGREES.

One man in Germany has made three million thermometers. That's what you might call making money by degrees.



Familiar Phrases Illustrated: Please drop me a line.

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Composer: "Did you hear the torment and despair in my song without words, in 'Tantalus,' that I just played you."
Listener: "No: but I noticed them on the faces of the audience."

LIGHTS OUT!

DAUGHTER: "I love him. He is the light of my life."

FATHER: "Well—that's all right; but I object to having my house lit up by him after midnight."

* * * * *

THE CURATE'S TIP.

Not long ago a workman from the forge and a girl from the factory appeared before the curate of a Leeds church to be united in matrimony.

After the ceremony, on learning that the fees went to the rector, the newly-made bride (much to the amusement of the curate) whispered, in a perfectly audible voice, to her husband:

"Give him (the curate) tuppence for himsel'."

The lady evidently thought that he deserved the price of a glass of beer.

* *

Mr. Paintbrush: "I've done a good deal of painting lately, but nothing very great. How are you getting on?"
Mr. Clothes Peg: "Oh! fine! I've been hung on the line this year!"

"John has five oranges, James gave him eleven, and he gives Peter seven, how many has he left?"
Before this problem the class recoiled.
"Please, sir," said a young lad, "we always does our sums in apples."

COULDN'T HELP IT.

TRAVELLER (in a railway carriage to fellow passenger): "Sir, what do you mean? This is the third time you have put out my match."

FELLOW TRAVELLER: "Force of habit. I'm a member of a volunteer fire brigade."

A TROUBLESOME DEBTOR.

"Shall I write out Slowpay's bill?" asked the clerk.

"No," returned the head of the firm, after some deliberation. "I think you'd better have it printed. Get about a hundred copies or so. You'll need that number before he pays it, and the time and money will be saved in the end."

* *

A PERTINENT QUESTION.

MAMMA: "You mustn't stand up near the window, dear."

WILLIE: "Why, mamma; will it turn the train over?"

* *

TOMMY'S REASON.

FATHER: "And what would you like to be, Tommy, when you grow up?"

TOMMY: "I'd like to be an artist, or a poet, or a musician, father."

FATHER (highly gratified): "These are difficult callings, my son. But why would you like to choose one of them?"

TOMMY (promptly): "Because then I would not have to get my hair cut, father."

* * * *

HEAD TROUBLE.

"How's your wife, Blinks?"

"Her head troubles her a good deal."

"Neuralgia?"

"No; she wants a new hat!"

* * * *

SPOILT THE HARMONY.

"How harmonious the colour of everything in this church is?"

"Yes, excepting the sexton. Why doesn't he wear stained glasses?"

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WHY MISS HIGHFLIGHER GAVE UP FURS AND FEATHERS.

The Story of a Dream.

I.

II.

III.

IV.

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

CONFESSIONS OF LITTLE CELEBRITIES.

THIS series of articles is one which it gives me great pleasure to publish. There is something deeply interesting and not a little pathetic about the infant prodigy. At a time when most children know nothing of the outside world beyond the nursery, these poor little mites have to brave the flare of publicity, "to school their manners and act their parts," and, worst ordeal of all, to receive unstinted adulation and admiration. I remember when Mr. Gordon Meggy, who interviews these little celebrities for me, first suggested the series, I said that I hardly envied him his task, as these children were certain to be conceited to a degree.

I was never more mistaken in my life, as regards the two little prodigies who first opened their hearts to Mr. Meggy—Miss Iris Hawkins and Master Max Darewski. Both of them were sweet and natural children, whom the loud praise of the world seemed not at all to have spoilt. The singular gifts which distinguished them gave an added charm to their personalities.

A YANKEE CRITIC.

A few months ago I published an article on the American "Summer Girl," in the course of which the author made a mildly caustic remark on the doubtful propriety of some of the bathing costumes fashionable in America. No sooner had the article appeared than I received an indignant protest from an American in London, who declared that our bathing costumes would never for a moment be tolerated in America, and that we, as a nation, were altogether too fond of throwing stones in glass houses, as the saying goes.

I wrote back in defence of my people, and received an amusing reply, which wound up as follows:

"I realise that we are painfully new—but give us a chance, and who knows but that some day you Englishmen will be packing your tea-baskets and portable bath-tubs for a trip to America to see the ruins of the Standard Oil Magnates' Palaces! Yes, in time you may love us quite as well as you love the Germans now.

"If only your King would become an American, we'd make him President, and I know he would be a good one!"

Nicely put, was it not?

REAL LIFE ROMANCES.

I receive daily budgets of stories from all parts of the globe describing the wild adventures of the senders. Unfortunately, the authors of some of the most thrilling adventures are too modest to allow me to publish their names, and permission to do so I always require as a guarantee of the truth of the story. One gentleman declared that, floating in a balloon over New York, his anchor got entangled in the engine of a westward speeding train, and that he was dragged through the air right across America. At the bottom of the MS. were the words:

"This is an absolutely true story. On no account publish my name."

I did not—nor the story.

THE EDITOR'S WASTE-PAPER BASKET.

Like the editorial sanctum, which is no sanctum, but a place perpetually invaded by people of every description, the editor's waste-paper basket is more or less of a mythical character. Fiction and the comic paper have given the editorial waste-paper basket a *rôle* it certainly does not possess nowadays. According to fiction and the comic paper, almost every rejected contribution goes into that much-maligned receptacle. I protest.

As far as I can remember, not one rejected manuscript which I have ever handled—and I have handled a good few in my day—has ever found its way into the waste-paper basket—not even those unaccompanied with stamps for their return journey. These are usually put aside until the author claims them and forwards return tickets. But throw them into the waste-paper basket—it is high time that malicious calumny were disposed of!

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